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To my dear -

Grandson -

with - love from

Grandmother -

Memphis

25th 1917.

WHERE DWELLS THE SOUL SERENE

BY

STANTON DAVIS KIRKHAM

AUTHOR OF

"THE MINISTRY OF BEAUTY"

"AS NATURE WHISPERS"

Spiritual poise arises from the inner controlling conviction that Love is the one defense against all that aims at man's integrity to himself.

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PREFACE

It should be the aim of every earnest book to act in some degree, however slight, as a medium for impersonal truth; and herein lies its use, should it attain to the dignity of usefulness, that it shall arouse some dormant faculty, shall animate our latent perception of the Immanent Soul. So may it strike some deeper note, some higher octave than is perchance commonly sounded; so may it awake the echoes and set us vibrating, so attune our Eolian harp that there too shall the winds of heaven call forth some faint divine melodies. Let it but radiate health and serenity, let it but stimulate our faith and prove a tonic to our indifference, and it will not have been written in vain.

Love, wisdom, truth,—how may we live and not dwell on these, how write to any purpose and not revolve about them? When we would speak of religion, of freedom, of life and art and nature, we shall yet miss the essential if we keep not these in view; and where they converge—these three—there is liberty, there is peace, and there dwells the Soul serene.

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I. ELEMENTS OF FREEDOM

THERE is ever in the human mind a longing and desire to transcend the limits of the known,—to break bounds and away. It is this desire that has led to great discoveries; it drew certain frail barks across the then unknown expanse of sea and brought a Columbus to the shores of a new world; it pushes men into the heart of Africa and carries them over barren grounds and ice-floes toward the Pole, or leads them to traverse the arid and desolate plateaus of Central Asia.

But it is in the realm of ideas that it leads us furthest and reveals the grandest continents; carries us to the more sublime elevations, and lays before us the more majestic panoramas,—for it is in the sphere of ideas alone that we may be said to pass all bounds and be free of limitations. It shall yet take us to the Mecca of our faith to behold the Kaaba, to the Lhassa of our ideal to stand before the Buddha-La. It goes not by the chart but would go where there are no charts; it goes not by the beaten road but follows rivers and mountain chains and the shores of continents, like migrating storks and swans,—for to follow a traveled road is to see what is already seen of all men; but to make your own road under the guidance of the Inner Light is to see and report what no other has seen. But though we traverse the Asian deserts, crawling at last feebly on hands and knees through burning sands—in delirium

seeking water—where shall we find so awful a desolation as exists within a human heart that has lost its hope and become devoid of sympathy? And though we cross the ice-floes, though we endure the arctic rigor, plodding onward through the polar night, creeping painfully over the interminable hummocks of the ice-cap, ever northward into the unknown dominion of cold, wresting mile by mile from the icy grip of winter, subsisting on blubber, oil,—the leather of our boots—until at last the Pole; lo, one shall be there to greet us, even the image of our mistaken selves whom we thought to leave in New York or London.

But, ah! what a sunny land lies in this same mind to be revealed when we turn our steps within! There, too, must we cross burning deserts and laboriously ascend the rugged cliffs, scale precipices and take our way over seracs and among crevasses; when we shall pass over even into a vale of Cashmere, smiling, verdant always,—where sparkle limpid streams, where bloom the rose and jasmine, where sings the bulbul. What if we find the Pole; what if we map the polar regions,—nay, build a road thither, who wishes to go? For we have here an arctic rigor, here perhaps in our own hearts, and we are awaiting a genial thaw. But to explore the unknown regions of the mind, to seek that shining land where dwells the Soul, serene,—here is a work worthy the true explorer's mettle. Let him explore this world of thought; let him blaze a path and wear a trail up over the mountains; let him recount his escape from the wilderness, and leave a record of his journey from bondage to freedom.

ELEMENTS OF FREEDOM

It is the royal privilege of every man to so live that his life and example shall be an inspiration; to so walk erect and free that men shall be constrained to inquire as to the means of his freedom. When we have tried the various motives of life in the crucible of experience, there is left the precious residuum of unselfishness; and it is this shining spherule which shall be the talisman of our freedom. When we act with a selfish motive we descend to a certain lower plane of existence and are instantly beset by all the conditions of that plane; we have opened the mind to the free ingress of all that is incident to selfishness, and to the thought of whoever is so inclined; we have unsuspectingly become allied to the rabble, and whether we will or no, must march with the crowd. We have fallen through the floor of our heaven and the heavenly sojourn is now but a memory. Egotism grows on a man, must be carried about like the Old Man of the Mountain, and weighs heavy upon the shoulders. Difficult it is to cross certain streams, but if we must support likewise the burden of our egotism it becomes well nigh impossible. But in our unselfish deeds we act divinely, and every man's altruism comes forth to welcome us. It is a profound truth that in our thoughts we join hands with all who are of the same trend of mind and become one of a brotherhood of like thinkers. When we have resolved to be free we are welcomed by the brotherhood of the free and made aware of their sympathy. New friends bring us nuggets of truth; it would appear that they had awaited our coming, gift in hand, and we are hardly surprised that at the right

moment certain men appeared who set us thinking, or indicated for us the right trail. But we shall yet discover laws to account for all that we now dismiss as coincidence.

There is a slavery to the dollar and a slavery to the clock, and so ridden is the mind with the mania of possession that houses, bric-a-brac, clothes, jewels fill the horizon, and *things* usurp the place of substance. But things are merely the foci of our desires and aversions, and have but that value with which we endow them. An astute man knows his superiority to all externals,—uses them or tosses them aside, and they serve his convenience; but little minds begin at once to revolve about the thing itself, and Tweedledum and Tweedledee must quarrel over some new rattle. It is well that we have such a business, so many dollars, such a house; but what if the business has us; what if the dollars have us? When Phaeton takes the reins, the sun goes out of his course. This cry of "me and mine" is but a declaration of servitude. What can he be said to possess who does not possess himself? The difference between comfort and luxury, home and house, carriage and equipage, may be just the price of freedom. There is no elegance comparable with the refinement of simplicity. The soul suffices to whomsoever perceives it; and this perception clothes one with the purple, surrounds him with elegance, and admits him to the true inmost circle of society, the patriarchs of true perception, before whom Colonna and Orsini are upstarts. In the difference between love and fear, trust and worry, work and toil, we again pay the price of freedom. It is the dead weight of worry

plus the straw which breaks a man's back. Worry never dug a well nor shingled a house, never built a bridge nor ran a bank. Men pass as substantial and important if they are sufficiently burdened with cares; but one is truly wise and reliable in proportion to the work and good accomplished without care. Worry is a leak, a dissipation; it is a mortgage on power that takes all our spare energy to pay the interest, and keeps us with nose to the grindstone.

The mind can entertain but one wise and happy concept of the body and that is the consciousness of that perfection which is health. Abnormal consideration for the body is the pillory in which many minds must fret and fume. It is not enough that we have health but we would have terrapin and truffles. Man himself elects what office the senses shall fill. He bids the eye behold virtue and it does so; vice, and it sees vice; so does the ear feed his desire and bring him companions to his thought. Not to know of the stomach, to be unaware of the existence of organs, to be conscious only of bodily perfection,—this is health, and this is also a measure of freedom. It suffices that we hear well, see well, eat and sleep well; we should have no concern with eyes, ears and organs. He is not the slave whose body is in bondage, but he who is in bondage to his body. Many a life sentence is served out under the blue sky; many a galley slave walks the streets. Health is essential to freedom, but a free mind is first necessary to health. A sound body implies a mind free from fear and anger, from all negation and weakness. "Plain living and high thinking"—be this our motto.

WHERE DWELLS THE SOUL SERENE

It is a good sign when conversation holds aloof from bodily ills and complaints. There are persons whose minds are infected and who carry with them a certain mental and moral contagion; whose thoughts pollute the mental atmosphere, and whose conversation breeds disease. Deliver us from those pathologic minds ever on the alert for symptoms, and anxious to proclaim their ailments. Is there to be no quarantine for these disease mongers? It is a false sympathy that would condole with our aches and pains; a wise regard ignores externals and addresses itself to the real man dwelling composed and tranquil beyond all appearances. It is a habit of certain persons to observe that one looks pale or lean and forthwith to settle upon him after the manner of house sparrows upon a sick bird, and to pick him to pieces so to speak. His paleness or his leanness becomes a reproach to him, and he is victimized by this false sympathy at every turn.

We owe it to the genius of health that we should look for its manifestation in every countenance; and if we fail to see therein a good color or an exuberant vitality, we may nevertheless find a clear eye or a calm expression, and it were wise and kind to comment on that rather than on any apparent lack. We owe it to truth that we no longer discredit man's high estate by addressing ourselves always to the body, and that we cultivate a spiritual considerateness rather than this overweening material solicitude. In your well wishes for men, wish them peace and let your concern be for their sanity and serenity rather than for their rheumatism.

What is it to be free but freedom from our false

impressions? To be fearless is to be godlike. It requires an ordinary and savage courage to face a cannon, but it takes a refined and gracious courage to face our impressions and dispel them. Our delusions, these are our enemies; our idle thoughts, these our insidious foes. To live true to the Soul requires the finer courage. We go into battle with colors flying and drums beating; we meet our delusions in silence, hearing no plaudits, spurred by no music. To come forth superior to all delusions, that the fear of death, of disease and poverty shall be swallowed in the victory of love,—this is indeed to be a victor and wear the laurel. To fear work or idleness, ridicule or praise, opinion or indifference, society or solitude is to be a slave to one or all of these.

If you have reached the stage of nonconformity, not to one institution in particular, but to all things external to you—to all but the divine pattern within you—so may you hope to be transformed. If you have come to esteem free thought as the birthright and heritage of humanity, so may you confidently hope to be free; for the thought precedes the state,—freedom in thought before freedom in action and life. The Spirit bids us cast off the shackles of tradition and forego our musty creeds. We must have the living Word; the truth shall make us free. Nurture your free thought, cherish it; it shall be a jewel in your crown. Free thought or slavish thought, which will you? Once resolved to think for ourselves and we shall become men; let others think for us and we remain puppets.

We are not to confound freedom with license nor

to suppose that the one through any transition may lead to the other, for freedom is the guerdon of a perfect apprehension of divine law and a conformity to the Will of God; it is in fact the realization of the Soul's identity with the Infinite and the recognition of the Divine Presence. We may ask with the Stoics,—who shall compel us more than Zeus? If God be for me, who can be against me? It is from ignorance, from mistaken impressions, from the tyranny of supposed laws that we would be free. License, on the other hand, is a lack of realization and a failure to apprehend the divine laws and relationship; and the greater the license the more complete the slavery.

Freedom is not a name in the sky; it is a condition to be actualized within. We shall not be free until we know ourselves. The true life is distinct from the senses, and when we awake from our dream we shall stand forth in the majesty of the Soul. Open the oak gall and within lies the larva of the gall-fly: it dwells within a tiny sphere, nor dreams of earth, nor sky, nor sunshine. One day visions of freedom—of a larger life—possess the maturing insect and forthwith he breaks his prison wall and beholds the glory of the day. The grossly feeding caterpillar no sooner views his world than he proceeds to devour it; but anon he becomes a free child of the air and sips only a drop of nectar.

There is in man a higher Self, which partakes of Divinity and transcends the illusions of sense. To seek this Self and to become one with it is the dictate of wisdom and the path of freedom. Self-union through spiritual unfoldment,—this is the esoteric

teaching of all great religions—a teaching that in all ages has influenced the few and eluded the many. We may trace it from the Upanishad to the Vedanta; read it in the Bhagavad-gita and in the Psalms of David. "Seeking for freedom, I go for refuge to that God who is the light of his own thoughts": thus sang the Aryan poet, and the sacred literature of the world echoes his thought.

It is commonly remarked that there is that quality in the tone of an instrument that takes one "out of one's self." There is, indeed, that which tends to bring one to one's self, which leads us back to the Self; and it is the mission, we may say, rather than the function of music, that it should take us out of the seeming, should lift us from the muddy every-day consciousness up into the clear and limpid atmosphere of the real. Music is a kind of wordless thought, a vibration too subtle for sense appreciation, but capable of instituting another and coarser vibration; it is, as it were, the thought essence itself made manifest through sound. So may the Soul resolve its message into a current form of expression, and hence the thrill we feel. Music offers a possible medium for the expression of ideas too subtle for spoken language. When we listen—when a great ear listens to great music—it uses no code, it translates nothing, it *feels*, it receives the spiritual impress of an idea,—the man comes to himself.

But these are but transitory and evanescent gleams that come through prelude and nocturne and rhapsody, and the vibrations of vast harmonies,—little glimmers and flashes in the prevailing murkiness. It is through concentration and meditation

upon the sublime principles of being which give rise to wisdom and truth; it is through contemplation of the ineffable relationship of the human and the divine that the individual is merged and liberated in the universal; it is in that silence profound that the eternal identity is perceived whereby the bolts are drawn, the portals opened and we go forth unshackled, free. The Alone returns to the Vast Alone; the limitless and unconditioned Soul mingles with the Spirit,—for it is only in thought that we have strayed from the precincts of the real; it is only in consciousness that we have departed from the presence of God.

II. THE IDEAL OF CULTURE

CULTURE is inseparably linked with reality; indeed, it may be considered as evidence of a perception of what is real, a recognition of true values, a deference to what is substantial in life, in character, in art and literature. As it is concerned with what is real, so it implies the cultivation of that alone which is permanent, of that which is spiritual. It is no turning of the sod, no mere raking of the intellectual surface, no scattering of a handful of flower seeds among the pigweed and the burdock; but it is a timber-felling, uprooting, stump-pulling movement. It is a crushing of the strata, an upheaval and an overturning, a flowing of the sea over what was dry land, a birth of mountain chains along the old sea margin and the subsequent appearance of a new beauty and an ever-increasing refinement. The birth of culture is an Appalachian revolution, but its growth is as gentle as the passing of a day in June. The history of evolution is not half written, for the evolution of form is but the introduction. It is the unfolding of the spiritual, the real, the cultured man from the germs which lie within the animal or natural man that shall form the vital chapters of the history.

The truest evidence of culture is this—that however we belie ourselves it addresses still the Soul, and regards us in the light of our possibilities: and

this is the innuendo by which it makes itself known, that it can do this while deferring always to those social precedents which refinement has established. To see men as they appear to be shows a lack of understanding; but to hold them up to their divine prerogatives is the essence of true nobleness.

But culture will have no pretense, no disguises. Divested of all externals, our money, our Latin and Greek, our accomplishments, taken from our customary surroundings, far from the pale of our circles and institutions, no longer relying upon the prestige of names and ancestry—what then is there to show? Culture takes our measure and takes it in kindness, but will not be deceived into mistaking a "forked radish" for a man. Away with semblance. Culture will have none of it. We need display no diploma, no degree, if we can show no fruit thereof. Useless that in college we studied metaphysics if now we know not our own minds, that we were proficient in psychology if we know not whether we are soul or body; to no purpose that we read philosophy if now we are discontent, or Theism if we have not trust in God; mathematics, and have demonstrated no plan of life; astronomy, and can see nothing beyond the nose. In vain our economics if we profess only politics; our history if we have learned only chronology; our rhetoric if we have nothing to say and can utter no truth. Farming would teach us to plant *live* seed if we would harvest a crop.

There is no school for culture save life only. It is evolved, not acquired; it is not an accretion but an expansion; it is a token of growth, but of a growth which is endogenous. Nor is it derived from association

with noble persons, for we but reflect their own. To cultivate the mind without the heart is to turn an arid soil that shall produce only sage-brush. A truly cultivated mind has learned first the virtue of the heart, for love is the basis of a true culture. Love is the most real thing in the universe, for God is Love; and therefore it is the substance and ideal of the cultured mind, and whatever we shall say of one may be placed to the credit of the other.

Love is cosmic, not personal; it is metaphysical, not emotional. It is the substance as well as the aroma of life. It is for the home and the club, the street and the counting-house. It is the only practical basis for all phases of social life. It is not a sentiment of youth, but is for all men and women, all nations, all created things. Love is the best business policy and the best national policy—this which lacks all policy and is content to be itself. It is the only diplomacy that does not fail. It can no more be detached from life than can gravitation be disassociated from matter; there is no occasion which it does not fit; there is no time and no place from which it may properly be excluded.

That which differentiates me from my neighbor is not real but seeming, and shall endure only so long as my imperfect sight endures; it shall disappear to my awakened vision, and I shall love him literally as myself, for he is myself; the self-same spirit is in him that is in me, that is in all men; and what is not spirit is neither he nor I. Do I aid him, I further my own advancement; whatsoever I give to another I add to my own character. It is in the nature of love that we shall have only in proportion as we give.

He only who gave the universe may fully possess it. We must impart our knowledge before we can profit by it; we must give our money before we can enjoy it. The secret eats into the heart; money burns in the pocket. Out with it! Uncover! Discover! Make manifest what is concealed. It is the genius of the West to proclaim, as it is of the Orient to conceal. The East has brooded much, has thought deeply, is silent and decadent. The West has thought lightly, has all to learn, but it proclaims joyfully and would impart, publish and make known; and while vulgarity disseminates that which is unreal, and wallows in the license of the press, culture proclaims its modicum of truth. Bread cast upon the waters returns the sweeter; and to return love for hate is to pay the highest deference to the Soul. To be loved we must love; to be blessed we must bless.

When shall we learn that God is synonymous with Good, and with Love; and whatsoever is not done in the name of God—that is to say, in the name of the Supreme Good—whatsoever is not consistent with Love, shall fail? If there is one God, then are we children of one Father; if there is one Mind, one Soul, one Heart, then do we share its intelligence and its love. There is a divine order in apparent chaos; there is a perfect unity in seeming diversity. We shall choose between eternal truth and national error, between divine order and human disorder. That which is true for the individual is none the less so for the nation which is but a larger, more comprehensive individual, and love is the cornerstone of a national culture. It is political shortsightedness that sees one code of ethics for the

individual and another for the nation; it is worldly fatuity that admits a golden rule in daily life but ignores it in national conduct. There is a wisdom which makes foolish our statesmanship; there is a noble procedure of love which scorns our diplomacy. Love is the genius of true diplomacy and good government. In the encouragement of labor, capital reaps a large benefit; in a love of humanity royalty needs tremble no longer; in a just consideration for each other nations cease to fear, cease the paltry, ignoble game where the cards are marked, the dice loaded, and the players sit uneasy in their chairs—suspicious and distrustful.

Love would have us disband our armies and dismantle our guns. The burden of fear weighs heavy upon the world, and only love shall lift it. In the days of unrefined savagery man dreamed that he was separate from the Source of Life, separate from his brother; and all the years he has lived in that dream, haunted by this mania of separateness—striving to advance his separate interests. And forsaking the rule of love he is overcome by fear and seeks protection from all he has alienated from himself; for inexorable is the law of love—the law of laws, which is never broken but which breaks the transgressor, which grinds him to powder. Europe turns uneasy in her dream; demands a tax on the salt and the cabbage of the poor; exacts of the peasant the best years of his manhood; of the women, toil and weariness; of the well-born, that they sacrifice better aims for a sword—and idleness. So much does a lack of national culture impose; such is the price of military pretense. But who shall protect us from ourselves

if love has gone out of the heart? The combined armaments of the world cannot offer safety to one shivering, fearful human creature, nor subdue the rebellion in one little mind. There is but one armor that will serve—the beautiful armor of love, mighty and invulnerable.

The love of the beautiful is ever a redeeming trait in the character of a people, and wherever it obtains in an eminent degree it sheds a luster upon that time and place and confers a distinction upon that race. Precisely for this reason does the genius of Japan exact always a certain deference from the esthetic world; for this same reverence for beauty is there somewhat national and pervades the mass of the people. It is revealed in the innate courtesy of common men; in the universal love of nature—where the blossoming of the cherry, the lotus and the chrysanthemum are events of almost national importance; where every mountain vista and every fair scene is cherished, is an heirloom of every son of Japan. We see its genial influence where bare-legged, straw-shod coolies can evince an appreciation for the exquisite charm of satsuma, of cloisonne and gold lacquer; where such men can look admiringly at a rare bronze of Mitsuhilo, or at a kakemono, or stand in rapt delight as the mellow tones of the great bell strike upon the ear—a volume of heavenly sound floating out upon the air from the temple among the cryptomerias. But such is only a little focusing of what is cosmic, a little evidence of what is not Japanese but universal, for it lies within the soul; of what is most truly and transcendently human and hence divine.

As love is the ideal of culture, so it is the ground of true morality. To be virtuous for love of virtue; to be upright for love of honor, benevolent for love of humanity, and equitable for love of justice—in short, to be good for love of God, such is morality; and the moral sense is but the right development of the idea of love,—for anything contrary to virtue is inimical to love; anything less than honor, equity and purity, is derogatory to love. Love is the radiant point for all virtues, and to live in accordance with it is to obey all moral laws. But to be benevolent for fear of criticism, to be virtuous for fear of consequences, honest for fear of the magistrate, or respectable for fear of society, is not morality but cowardice. The kingdom of heaven is not revealed through fear of hell, for fear is a hell in itself. Who fears any hell is on the road thither. There is more hope for a sturdy knave than for him who walks straight for fear of punishment.

What passes for immorality is largely fear. It is not love of drink that makes the most drunkards, for Bacchus soon disgusts his votaries; but it is fear of life, fear of sorrow, fear of what is uncongenial and hard to bear, of weakness, or of ennui. Fear of poverty breeds rogues and misers. He who loves life as he finds it, who loves to battle with it in his strength; he who is engrossed in his love for his fellow men—in his love for the idea, would never obscure it with alcohol, nor seek to hide his head beneath the sands of an opium dream. Immorality is not alone a tendency of the vicious and luxurious, it is found wherever love is not. There is the immorality of riches, of ostentation and display, for

love of truth enjoins simplicity. There is the immorality of pretense, for love of what is real forbids it. The inner wealth reveals itself; a mere outward sign should be concealed. It were better to part with our riches if we are unhappy, for they but proclaim an inner poverty; better to save our money if we lack taste, for to spend it is to advertise our vulgarity. To love truth because of the truth is the essence of refinement; and to be true to one's self is to be moral.

How persistently does the obdurate mind oppose barriers to the free course of generous impulse; with what perseverance does it stand in its own light and recoil from the personalities which enshroud the human soul—bring objection upon objection, repulsion, shrinking, coldness! All this in its blindness, because it perceives not the Ineffable One looking through every pair of eyes, beating in every heart. Foolish are we who think thus to protect ourselves; we but erect barriers of mist to oppose the infinite array of love, and presently the beautiful star of human sympathy shall pierce the murky clouds with its serene ray and we shall be confused and ashamed in the presence of that which we but now denied. Then shall we arise and witness the glory of that star of love, nevermore to lose sight of it, for it illumines the way and is the reason and hope and happiness of life, and whenever its divine light falls full upon a human face it is transfigured.

If you would read character, be kind, for love is the stone which reveals the gold in human nature. Love is wise and looks behind the mask; behind the

cold exterior it sees the yearning for expression and recognition; beyond the barrier of cynicism it detects the sensitive, affectionate nature, thinking thus to shield itself. It looks through austerity and sees gentleness; looks past all the array of proud and forbidding aspects with which we confront the world and sees the sterling qualities which we would thus conceal. So easy is it to address ourselves to the defects in other men, to note the faults where it were better to have scanned the virtues; so difficult to deal with them divinely. But love is indeed slow to judge; it looks beneath the scowl, beneath the mask of bitterness, of scorn and arrogance, and beholds always the gentle, unawakened soul. With its beautiful child-like gaze it pierces the shell of irascibility and of churlishness and selfishness, and whispers, "Come forth, O my Brother!" It reads between the lines; reads the latent good, the possibilities of the poorest, meanest man; it scans the book that every man carries in his face and form and learns how the youthful aspirations were smothered; how the longings of a heart were crushed; the yearnings stifled. Love always transcends the personality and sees in its objectionable traits but the tough shell which encloses the sweet kernel, as the leathery rind of the mangosteen serves to protect the most delicate of fruits,—for as fragile plants sometimes hide from the glare of the sun, so do oftentimes rare and beautiful natures seek to screen themselves from the world.

All the world loves the great-hearted man whose love is as deep as humanity and as broad as creation. To him—the sublime soul—come loving influences

from all points—from the distant stars pouring into him, up from the earth rushing to him, emanating from the grasses and the sedges, from leaves and flowers, out from the throats of birds floating to him—flowing and surging into his being. His love is all inclusive, from the lowest to the highest, from the meanest to the noblest; for the drunkard and the fallen; for the vicious and the insane; for the hopeless and despairing—for all, but one thought of kindness, beholding within every wretched body the germs of something higher, the seeds of something nobler. God uses such a man and through him are prayers answered. He is at the earnest call of mankind; wherever he is attracted it is to minister to some soul that seeks the light, some mind that is full to overflowing with vain longing and dissatisfaction. He hears the cry for help of those who have come to stand alone and know not yet which way to turn. He hears all these voices calling—voices of the night; hears them on the city streets; hears them in the wind and waves; hears them in the silence. Wherever men and women work, wherever men and women wait; wherever lives seem poor and barren; where they are joyless and uneventful; where the crisis seems too great; when the strain would seem to break—there he heeds them and obeys. He goes to whisper courage, goes to give his strong right hand, goes to take a light into the darkness.

To be cultured is to possess a plummet which shall sound all institutions and the minds of men, for while there is nothing so shortsighted as shrewdness—which is a very mole—there is nothing more

farseeing than love; it is to have a hazel wand that will unfailingly indicate the hidden reality. And the exercise of culture is the passing this wand over science and arts, over customs and fashions, over books and conversations; and wherever it points, there shall we dig. The wand passes over the new book of many editions—passes over the things of a day and gives no sign, but on the classic ground of truth it fairly leaps in the hand.

Culture is the token of a true self-sufficiency, for only that which is real shall suffice. How shall it be attained through that which today is and tomorrow is not? Shall we draw a circle in the sand and stand within it a few hours until the tide rises? We awake from our classical slumbers, and lo! new constellations have filled the heavens, and men prate of new gods, and the old altars are forsaken. But love is the same yesterday, today, and forever, and whatever things are not built upon it are circles in the sand, and as continually fall away.

III. THE IDEA OF RELIGION

SO UNFAILINGLY are the minds of men dominated by the tyranny of the institution that even to quote the inspired utterance of Hebrew or Hindu has become somewhat inexpedient to whomsoever essays to speak independently of truth; inexpedient lest he shall be thought to commit himself to some particular and partial view,—to be the phonograph into which some sect or cult has spoken. But truth will be subject to neither book nor institution; will not be cornered nor held in the treasury with the brocaded vestments and sacred relics. And he who would act as her spokesman must speak from without the world's institutions and from within himself.

Nevertheless, those visions of truth which have been vouchsafed to men in all ages, and the record of which, more or less adulterated, forms what is known as the sacred literature of the world, give aid and encouragement to all who search for the true meaning of life; and he who gives ear to the communication of the Spirit will find their echo nowhere oftener than in the Bible. But once and for all may we lay aside prejudice and tradition and read the Bible with open eyes; let us abjure it as a fetish that we may find in it an inspiration. And while we behold the glorious expression of that truth which underlies all religions, we shall find superimposed upon this and to a great degree obscuring

it, the dogma and superstition of another period; the tales and allegories, fable and fiction which arose in after times to give to the inspired sayings unity, from a certain exterior point of view, that they might become subject to the purposes of the institution and amenable to the ends of priestcraft. Nor are we warranted in assigning an ethical unity to so heterogeneous a collection of writings as that which constitutes the Bible. Such is the deference to the authority of names that we exclude from the canon of scripture certain books as apocryphal; but to the sublime authority of truth we offer no such unqualified allegiance, and are content that much that is apocryphal from this standpoint and at variance with the canons of reason should remain. We may assume that the familiar adage of the devil's quoting scripture would never have arisen were there no grounds for supposing scripture to contain that which might be construed to serve his ends. But this fallacy of the infallibility of scripture is in no sense unique, but pertains, it may safely be inferred, to all writings that are esteemed as sacred, governing the Hindu in his relation to the Veda, and the Mahometan to the Koran; investing alike with sacred dignity whatever incongruity may occur on some antique scroll, some venerable papyrus or parchment.

But there shall surely be held a council of reason whose office it will be to weed this sacred garden and to separate the tares from the wheat, to disassociate the visions of seers—the pearls of truth—from the mere record of misdoings; that divine edicts may not again be cited in justification of the savagery of

a primitive people, and that we may no longer promulgate as sacred that which forms a chapter in the annals of crime. Thus shall they be absolved at the confessional of their own higher natures who have refrained from giving such husks to the fair mind of childhood, that asking for bread it should no longer be given a stone. Whereupon that Bible we have so long held with palsied hands and read with bleared vision shall be invested with a new glory, and filled with a new meaning, or rather with one that is never old.

We shall see that in its final analysis the Bible presents an epitome of the Soul's history,—or, properly, of the history of man's recognition of the Soul, reaching its ultimate expression in the life of Jesus whose transcendent genius lay in his perfect apprehension of the spiritual basis of life and of the oneness of the Universal and the individual Soul, whereby he realized his true relation with the Infinite. Him all men reverence but none comprehend. "Surely," they say, "His was a voice from heaven"; and so he has become a fixed star, his early adherents a constellation. He dared so assert the supremacy of the Soul that men repudiate their manhood and worship him as God. So dazzling is that vision of man, so radiant his countenance that the eyes of men are put out and they behold not their brother. Nineteen centuries have elapsed since that grand and solitary Soul dared assert the prerogatives of mankind, dared rely upon the Infinite Love and trust the Unseen. But the voice which spoke in him speaks in us today,—shall speak nineteen centuries hence, and admonishes us likewise of our divine

origin and spiritual inheritance. The Spirit of Truth within us rises in majesty to welcome all expression of truth,—and time is not. Behold, men like ourselves proclaimed this truth and saw these visions. And now shall we do likewise; shall lift up our heads from the dust; shall stand again for the dignity of spiritual manhood and proclaim anew the freedom of man made in the image of God, and so doing shall come to write our own bibles. For we are under no fatality that we should forever translate Pali and Sanskrit, Hebrew and Greek, that we may hear the Word of God; the English tongue will serve as well to record the monitions of the Spirit.

We may assign as the basis of religion the idea of God and the recognition of the Soul, for this implies a relationship and dependence. And the love of this supreme idea, the desire for a deeper realization of this idea, the yearning which in some minds seeks satisfaction in union with the universal Soul, in others in absorption into it, and in others again in a realization of the present and eternal identity of the individual with that universal, from which it has never been and never can be separate,—this is the working out or approximation of the divine archetype, and constitutes the reason and purport, or we may say, the idea of religion, in virtue of which man must always seek his Maker. This longing implanted in the human heart, this groping for the Infinite, while primarily natural and spontaneous, tends always in the hands of a priesthood to become conventional and perfunctory in its expression, and to congeal into various dogmatic systems.

In considering the idea of religion it is to be observed that while its expression is prone to crystallize into some form, it is itself superior to all forms; it cannot be contained, and tends to escape whenever there is any conventional or molding process. To the form of religion man has contributed all that is blackest in his character; to the idea of religion he has given all that is noblest. Not but what there is a time and place for every phase of religious thought; and in its day emotionalism, which is pseudo-religion par excellence, serves as one swing of the pendulum that forever oscillates between credulity and apostasy, between orthodoxy and heterodoxy, reverence and fanaticism. A certain refining and evolutionary process is always in order in the religious world, whereby certain types tend to become extinct and others dominant for a time. The decline of any phase is marked by the degeneracy of rational belief into superstition and bigotry, piety into pharisaism, and sanctity into cant. But we should perhaps discredit none, realizing that the worst have at least the negative virtue of undoing themselves, while that central idea of religion remains ever intact in its purity and sublimity, though temporarily misconstrued and even lost sight of; their vice lies in living out of date and beyond their time,—saurians rampant in a mammalian age, but destined nevertheless to disappear.

Under the impetus of this idea the world discards its religious speculations as a growing caterpillar moults its skin,—whenever in the course of its growth the skin becomes too close. The religious world has moulted repeatedly and the cast-off integuments

are of deep interest to the religio-paleontologist, forming as they do a mould or cast of successive bodies of thought. As a caterpillar will turn and devour the skin from which it but now emerged, so it happens not infrequently that the old belief is absorbed and incorporated with the new. The Hellenic larva after successive moults, mythologic and philosophic, produced the Platonic butterfly, a rare and beautiful fossil perfectly preserved in the strata of human thought, which before its decline doubtless contributed somewhat of its essential philosophic qualities to determining the form of the then newly arisen type of Christianity. From Egypt has descended to us a fragment of the Hermetic fossil, by some looked upon as a sort of Rosetta Stone to the ancient Wisdom Religion; from remote Persian antiquity comes the Avesta, dwindled and shrunken but still animate; from Sinai proceeds still the thunder of that awful and unapproachable Jehovah of Judaism, while the tablets of stone are set up within the households of Christendom; of the Chaldean and Assyrian there remains hardly a fragment. In the far East there arose a true Psyche—a winged soul—to flutter over the hills and plains of Hindustan, which retains still its ethereal beauty nor has lost the iridescent sheen of its glorious wings; and the spirit of the Upanishads went abroad to be a solace to whomsoever through its truth should find the Way. And these Upanishads were the rich spiritual soil from whence sprang the gentle Buddha, to invest with the force of a transcendent individuality some phases at least of the time-honored truth, and to mark even at that early day a recoil from the

perversion and extremes of priestcraft. It was in Palestine where now the spirit of the past sits brooding, and nature lies under the spell of a mighty reverie; where blossom still the rose of Sharon and the lilies of the field, where, in the solemn landscape, silent spectral Bedouins pursue their dreamy way between hedgerows of prickly pear, swinging rhythmically on stately camels; it was in this land of Syria that the ineffable vision of truth declaring itself in the parable and imagery of Semitic genius was destined to sound with unequaled sublimity the Word of God; while it was in succeeding years in Alexandria that the streams of Semitic and Aryan thought were to unite, thenceforth to flow onward through the centuries—the great river of Christianity; the fusion of Jewish monotheism, Jewish ethics, and Jewish legendary and traditional lore, with the philosophic culture of Greece; the whole illumined and made glorious by the pure radiance of love,—the law that supersedes the tablets of stone, the light that removes the veil of the past, the benign influence that softens the hearts of men and makes the esoteric teaching of Jesus preeminent because it is the religion of love. The world has since rent its integument in divers places. But whether it was a sudden and meteoric outburst such as the appearance of the Prophet and the rise of Islam, or the more gentle appearance of Sufiism: or as in the Christian world a rending asunder as of Greek and Latin, or a great split like the Reformation, or the continued disruptions of Papist and Huguenot, of Establishment and Disestablishment, Dissenters, Come-outers, Calvinists, Wesleyites,

Swedenborgians, Puritans, Quakers, Dunkards, or what not; it was always a rift and readjustment to suit the infinite differentiation of human needs. And now is this old cuticle cracking still and peeling here and there.

But through every religion there runs one general line of cleavage separating it into two parts, into two distinct phases—mysticism and scholasticism. This division has never been wanting in Christianity, but since the days of the German Mystics has been perhaps but little recognized,—for the expression of mysticism is always intermittent, no two phases being identical, but appearing now with a transcendental, again with some other aspect; it has seldom been institutional, and is more often individual than collective. We are witnessing in these very days a revolt against scholasticism and a renaissance of true mysticism: a mysticism that stands for truth, and for the spirit as against the letter; a mysticism that represents the philosophy and the theosophy of Christianity against its theology and dogmatism; that accepts the Christ in the light of its philosophic antecedents as the manifestation of the Logos, the bond between the human and the Divine, the Light that lighteth every man that comes into the world; that divests Jesus of his legendary and mythical character, and looks for the birth of the Christ within every awakened man; that sees in the finding of that inner Christ the Way which leads to God, in the assumption of that Christly mind the ideal of the spiritual life. And it beholds in the historic Christ an example of the divine possibilities of mankind when conscious of the Logos it

abandons itself to God: when abiding in the spiritual consciousness it shall make its claim accordingly and shall do even as was done, and still greater things. This mysticism is not concerned with what is legendary and traditional in Christianity but with that which is spiritual, philosophical and metaphysical,—with that spiritual truth which Jesus applied to mankind, in the realization of which all men become sons of God, and of which his life and works were the attestation. It would aim therefore to live spiritually in the conviction that it is the spirit which avails and not the flesh; that it is expedient to seek and work for that which is permanent,—to lose the sensuous life of strife and turmoil in order to find the philosophic life of peace and love. Thus it seeks to experience a rebirth of consciousness—to be born again—to attain a child-like purity of mind that there may be entered that state of harmony with the facts of love and being which constitutes the ever present kingdom of heaven.

The scholastic mind of today looks still with disfavor upon the mystic. Nevertheless it is obvious that mysticism, or the perception of the Divine in man, has for its premise that basis of truth which must ever find corroboration in the spiritual mind, whereas the dogmas of scholasticism do not; nor can we fail to recognize the fact that Jesus himself was the Mystic of mystics. And though mysticism in general may be liable to perversion and to abuses that lead to self-deceit, scholasticism has been productive of greater abuses and a far more general deception.

It is preeminently the office of religion to be the high priestess of truth, to "show the besotted world

how passing fair is wisdom." Reason will not for a moment sanction a divorce between philosophy and religion. Philosophic conviction and religious faith are not only compatible, but are, properly speaking, complementary; and to cast out philosophy from religion is to degrade the latter to a superstition. It is to be regretted that the ancient term *theosophy* has lost its deep and universal application and come to have so limited and conventional a significance, for it best expressed the idea of religion. As theology is the bane, so is truth the genius of religion, and serves to give definite aim and purport to human life and thought; to supply the necessary bias to the mind and afford consistency and reason and identity of purpose throughout the continuity of life eternal; to supply a thread that is never broken but shall be taken up in the successive phases of existence, and without which life would be fragmentary and disconnected. Material aims are devoid of continuity and consistency and cannot supply this thread, but broken ravelings merely. Given the fact of consciousness, and the mind must have a reality of which to be conscious—upon which to reflect. It is plainly its function to be conscious of truth, and to reflect upon that which is real and essential to its life and progress.

There has been advanced no more untenable proposition than the dogma of Revelation; an appointed time and place for the revealing of truth. Truth is properly not so much revealed as it is discovered. It stands an eternal revelation to all men who are able to perceive it. Our obtuseness is the only concealment; as we ascend the mountain the

view expands. To take to oneself credit for the discovery savors of conceit. God is speaking ever to those who have ears to hear. Were one who had been born blind suddenly to obtain sight, he would doubtless cherish his first perception of common objects in the light of a discovery, and would say of the stars, "what glorious and shining objects have I not discovered in the heavens!" When in the past some one received his spiritual sight we speak of it with bated breath as revelation—a something supernatural. He looked, indeed, upon the everlasting stars at which we blink with rudimentary eyes; and did we but perceive a tithe of the cosmic revelation eternally awaiting our recognition we would be overwhelmed with the majesty of our position, and evermore look about us with reverence and awe. Would that we might strike from the Bible the word *fear* and write *love*, that we would have authority, if need be, that love is the beginning of wisdom. The atmosphere of Sinai or of Patmos was no more favorable to clear vision than is that of Boston or New York. Whoever ascends the Sinai of his own being, whoever retires to the serenity and solitude of some inner Patmos or Buddh-Gaya, there to live free from outer hindrance, stands in a fair way to discover anew some facts of being.

Truth takes its rise not from the Bible, nor the Upanishad, nor the Avesta, but from the Soul, and antedates all books. These preponderant institutions, Christianity, Brahmanism, Buddhism, Mahometanism, Shintoism, Jainism,—are not so much religions as phases of religion. Truth comes from within and is recognized in the book only upon its

inward cognition. Burn every book and there would remain a residuum of truth no less than now is. From a child we may have read and conned the Bible, but not until the day of our regeneration shall we perceive its message; and in that day we shall feel that heretofore we have read and heard that mostly which was unessential and without real import. To love and understand what is best in Browning, or Emerson, or Thoreau, honors one's spiritual perception, for the substance of their writing eludes the purely intellectual mind. When one speaks of Thoreau as of a naturalist merely, it may be assumed he is not yet able to read Thoreau; for botany was his pastime,—religion was the serious pursuit of his life.

The language of the Soul is the same for all times and all men; it is a key to what is worth unlocking in the scriptures of all races. It interprets as readily the imagery and idiom of a Semitic as of an Aryan or a Turanian people. A Seer speaks from the desert and his words pass from tongue to tongue, from century to century, and are received with a thrill of recognition by kindred minds today. Who so cosmopolitan as truth, for she is at home in Egypt and in Syria, in Persia and in India, Europe and America. To the Persian she is a Persian, to the Arab an Arabian, to the Hindu a Hindu, but to Christendom she remains still a Hebrew.

Love of God is the reason for all that is true in religion as fear of some god or devil—it matters not which,—is the ground of fetishism. Only that which springs from the heart, only that which is implanted in the spiritual consciousness is vital

in religion. The zenith of theology points the nadir of religion, which declines with the ascendency of dogma. Such is the disparity between the nucleus of truth in a religious system and the tenets of the institution that has been builded around it, that the nearer we draw to the central figure and the spirit of his philosophy, the further do we depart in sympathy from the system.

It is the aim of religion that we should preserve our integrity before God; how much, then, depends on the idea of God! There is perhaps no such thing as an absolute atheism, but there are many strange gods. There are ninety-and-nine beautiful names of Allah and there are as many that are not lovely. To deny one god and bow to a supreme God, Fate, does not constitute atheism but is another form of monotheism; as to believe in God and the devil is polytheism. The decline of mythology no doubt marks the ascent of religion, but it is no abrupt transition and the form of religion reveals always a certain mythologic impress. It matters not whether our Pantheon be of deities or of saints. An anthropomorphic God is the child of mythology. The Greek in the day of his myths knew naught of mythology, for what we so denominate was to him his religion; and posterity shall as surely ascribe the taint of mythology to that which we deem our religion, for the religion of one period is judged somewhat mythologic from a later and more advanced age. The world has passed from that ancient mythology, prehistoric or connate with the beginnings of history, to that later phase which is premetaphysical and now merging into metaphysics. And there are

not wanting iconoclasts that would overthrow the gods of fate and chance, of wrath and arbitrary decrees, and declare the one true God of Love, knowing the false gods to be the projection of human ignorance. In the words of the Eleatic Xenophanes:

> "If sheep, and swine, and lions strong, and all the bovine crew,
> Could paint with cunning hands and do what clever mortals do,
> Depend upon it, every pig with snout so broad and blunt
> Would make a Jove that like himself would thunder with a grunt."

Theology has inclined ever to a god of battle and inferred that men have been created and set on occasion to war with one another that principle might be vindicated. But principle needs no vindication and forever asserts itself. Though humanity transgress as one man, divine law remains immutable: vengeance though sought in the name of Infinite Love returns upon the seeker.

A religion serves a truly moral and beneficent end only in so far as its scheme is in accordance with truth. We can no longer afford to be ignorant of the principles of metaphysics. It is not to be assumed for a moment that while physical science is making such rapid progress, the science of mind itself has not undergone a like development. Metaphysics, no less than chemistry, has outgrown its alchemistic and speculative period and is now an applied science. It has been remarked that there was a time when if the facts did not agree with the dogmas of a religion, so much the worse for the facts.

There may be those who still regard the coach-and-four as the only proper method of conveyance and who fondly hope to see it reinstated. Man, despite what he may appear to be, is a spiritual being, having his life in God who is Spirit, and to declare himself anything less than that is to disparage his chance of present realization to just that degree. Being implies the inherent equality of mankind: theology sees one or a few elevated above all others. Equity decrees that every man shall accept the responsibility for his acts: theology would have one assume the responsibility for all. Being affirms life to be continuous,—a perpetual sequence of cause and effect; theology would have it broken and disconnected.

All men have some religion, but few have the faculty of discerning that which is true in the various forms of religion. It requires rare discernment to distinguish the grain of wheat in its bushel of chaff,—to neither overlook the seedlet nor be overwhelmed and smothered in the chaff. It wants a fine spiritual balance to go thus far with a religion and no further; to go the full measure of love and spirituality and stop short of theology and a perversion of metaphysics,—to accept the spirit and reject the letter; to discriminate between that which will encourage the spiritual and perceptive faculties, and that again which produces atrophy of the will and indifference to present life—and leads to the abyss of inertia. In the maze of philosophic and religious systems through which the inquiring mind may wander, there is offered always the safe conduct of the Spirit. Choose none! Reject none! But take from all that

which is for you and it shall be given you to construct therewith that which will sustain you and best serve your development. Be true to your Self and all shall work to your advancement: be true, and truth shall appear to you in letters of light. But false to your Self, you shall be overwhelmed in the wilderness of error.

There is nowhere a greater lack of independence than in matters of religion. It is now sixty years since Emerson remarked with rare insight that it already indicated "character and religion" to withdraw from the religious meetings. We continue to appoint men to do our thinking and our praying, nor consider it derogatory to the dignity of the Soul that another should undertake to make our peace with heaven. We are content to be sheep rather than men, and to walk with God by proxy. The fallacy of institutional and ceremonial religion lies in asserting one to have done the thinking for the many, in claiming one could achieve the salvation of the many. But God deals not with communities nor races but with individuals, and every man shall work out his own salvation,—shall save himself from ignorance. How may he do this if not by thinking for himself; how may he become wise if not by his own efforts. Goodness comes not by another's virtue nor wisdom by another's thinking. The idea of religion stands out clearly to the spiritual mind, and where there are the more mysteries, the more obscure signs and symbols, there is found the less religion. It is to no purpose that the paraphernalia of mystery was designed to mask the truth from the unfeeling gaze and to reserve the esoteric for the reverential homage

of the initiate, for truth will out to whomsoever is ready to receive it. There is no need to conceal the esoteric from the vulgar, for it is its own concealment. As well talk of concealing telescopic nebulæ; astronomers will discover and map them, while farmers will never look for them. Signs and symbols no less than pomp and ceremony are the retainers of a system and serve as a retinue that shall impress the multitude; for whereas pomp dazzles the eye, the symbol confuses the intellect.

If your religion is the result of another's persuasion, be assured it is not so much a mark of spiritual growth as of the lack of individuality. What has the soul to do with creeds and conversions? If you have accepted the faith of your fathers as such, it will fail you. We are required each to derive a faith of our own, and none other will suffice. We cling to an ancestral belief, but not until we give up this faith in another shall we find that faith in ourselves by which alone we stand; not until we give up the God in the skies shall we behold the measure of our own identity with the Infinite; not until we cease looking for the heaven of the future shall we find the heaven of the present. We must look to it that our religion leads us forward and not backward. You who have been nurtured in the cherished traditions of a time-honored belief shall one day be beset with doubts. You cannot escape them; they are incident to an ultimate perception of the idea of religion. May you welcome that day and encourage those doubts. They are angels in disguise and presage the appearance of a plant from the seed which but for them would have rotted in the ground. When you have

said, "I ought to believe" that which you cannot believe, you have belied yourself. Your very doubts shall stimulate you to a faith that is real, as your aspirations imply and are the guarantee of that which you seek. Say not, "Lord help me in mine unbelief," but, if you will, "Lord help me to be true to myself." It has been said that to doubt the evidence of the senses was the first step in philosophy. It is equally true that to doubt the evidence of any authority recognized as absolute or infallible is the first step in true religion.

We need never despair of attaining to faith because of present doubts; never to have doubted would signify credulity rather than faith. We shall not discard the reason and repudiate the mind because they declare contrary to a creed, the product of some mind. Faith is transitive, requiring an object, and so implies that its object is supreme to the consciousness. Faith in a system or creed or anything external to us is subjection to what is impermanent, and hence is itself ephemeral. But faith in the interior Self is allegiance to that which shall stand unmoved when the heavens and earth have passed away. How shall we be satisfied with bookishness and monkishness who must have *religion?* Shall we forswear the Soul and be content with less than truth? How can we refrain from inquiring, who are given minds wherewith to inquire? Search! Search! Search!—that religion may come to be an invigoration, a resource and an inspiration, and shall no longer be deemed a token of weakness and decline.

There are men who are ashamed both of appearing religious and of not appearing so. Into such

disrepute has piety fallen, that a pious man is often looked at askance, and is suspected of using it as a cloak for nefarious purposes. Religion is a tabooed subject on six days of the week. How do we fall short of the idea of religion that religious observance should be regarded largely as a solace for emotional women! A long face is no badge of faith. A gaunt hollow-eyed specter is no saint. You shall know one is truly religious by his joyousness. Religion is for the heroic and the strong; it is the flower of spiritual manhood and womanhood. It is not for Sundays alone but for all days. We read of a primitive German people who believed in a Deity too sublime to be worshipped in temples made with hands. How, then, has our God dwindled that we must seek him always within some petty enclosure! When religion springs from the heart we need enter no church, but perceive that all times are times of prayer—that living is praying,—and the universe but the cathedral of the Spirit, the fixed stars the angles of its entablature, the signs of the zodiac its frieze. Set times and set places as well as formulas and creeds all conspire against what is true and ringing and joyous in religion. A man proclaims his religion in his life and shows it in his face; worships God in the nobleness of his life, and shows his reverence in the love of men and of animals; reveals it in tolerance, kindness, gentleness and strength. Our love of mankind is the measure of our love of God; our faith in the eternal goodness, eternal progress, is the test of our religion.

IV. THE NATURE OF PRAYER

ALWAYS has the mountain peak been a symbol of things spiritual, and Ida and Olympus, Sinai and Fujiyama bear witness of the dignity with which it is invested. It typifies the ascent from a gross consciousness to a broader outlook, a more inspiring view. The dweller on the mountain looks abroad over the fogs that obscure the lowlands; and he who beholds life from the vantage of spirit no longer feels the limitations that beset the natural man,—limitations that vanish before the all-discerning spiritual vision. To behold good as partial betokens shallowness and is virtually to deny God. All things are possible to man on the spiritual plane of life. Space, time and personality are finite conceptions that shall one day fade from the mind. Man is a chord in the divine harmony, a channel to the Supreme Intelligence. As the Soul is one with the Infinite so surely is it heir to all things. Shall we not believe that the things the Father hath are ours? We may recognize without only that which is already within, for the objects of desire are but the projections of the mind. The noumenon is the unseen but eternal entity, the spiritual prototype of the phenomenon, which though seen is but ephemeral.

Only in the world of ideas may things be said truly to exist; and we are the proper agents, each according to his capacity to make them manifest. In all-

pervading desire the mind becomes one with the essence of its desire. Does it desire purity? It identifies itself with the principle of purity; it touches the Infinite at that point, and forthwith the stream of purity flows through that mind which becomes its channel. In the realm of ideas exist all possible architectural forms; man the architect focuses his thought on this, his desire, and lo, cities are built. So man the carpenter or the mechanic becomes the agent of the Infinite as surely as does man the sculptor or the painter.

But we are bound by the consciousness of matter. We show our materialism most in what is termed our spiritualism, that we should seek always to materialize that which is spiritual. Why must we look to some exhibition to be convinced of the ever present reality of the Spirit—or of spirits, for that matter? It is on a par with pinching oneself to see if one is alive. When we are fully known to ourselves we shall doubtless find that no separation ever takes place between the Soul and its affinities, that no separation is possible. It is from the living that we are often the more remotely separated. No wonder we cannot speak with the departed when in all our life together we never spoke them, never once addressed the spirit in them but were content with a babbling intercourse—a mere crossing of shadows. What is there to prevent our communicating with those who must ever remain near to us save only our uncommunicativeness, our dullness and lack of versatility and spiritual address? We are poor listeners as yet to spiritual things, and must appear dull indeed to one who attempts to converse with us

from an unseen plane. With what patience must these unseen friends din in our spiritual ears and pass before our spiritual eyes, awaiting our tardy recognition. But we are unseeing and unheeding and unbelieving, and must have a sign—a rapping on the wall or the prating of some one in a darkened room. A sign! Always a sign! As if there were anything not a sign of the spiritual entity; as if the phenomenon were anything but a symbol. To have lived is the sign of continued and perpetual life; and the yearning for a recognition of the invisible is itself the assurance of the spiritual presence. We shall not have a material perception of spiritual things, but of material things only; and would we bridge the Beyond and dwell here and now in spiritual companionship we shall spiritualize our own natures rather than seek to materialize the Spirit.

We see in the world a steadfast adherence to a *form* which usurps the office of prayer: a kind of ecclesiastical dust thrown in the eyes of men. Here is not prayer but an expression of faithlessness in the divine order; a weekly report, as it were, from the officious heads of departments to an incompetent executive, with suggestions for governing the universe and directions for the amelioration of apparently untoward conditions.

He who is filled with a sense of the Divine Love and resigns his life to its keeping, presumes not to dictate as to the outcome. He who prays to a just God asks not for a suspension of law, which would not be justice; who prays to a God of Wisdom presumes not to instruct One who is All-Wise. A man's idea of God is an infallible test of his condition.

Does he pray to a God of Revenge, so surely is he himself revengeful: if to a God of Love, then does he esteem love the greatest of all things. Men pray to Mars and to Athene, but as there was in Athens, so is there still within the human heart an altar to the Unknown God.

True prayer is not a petitioning, but a claiming; it is begotten not of infirmity of the will, but of assurance,—is not weakness but strength; and he that apprehends the nature of prayer bends not the knee but towers in majesty. He goes forth to meet his own; he ascends the mount to speak with God. It is the beggar asking alms, the slave imploring mercy, who grovel in the dust.

Prayers are not spoken, they are lived. Our lives are our prayers and they are answered each after its own kind, be the seeking for worldliness or for wisdom. But this babbling—this lip service in which we foolishly indulge, is confuted by the very flowers of the field. The blossom unfolds its petals, and in its fragrance and its color expresses its desire; thus, it offers its prayer and waits assured of the answer,—assured of the visit of the bee that shall consummate its life's purpose.

In considering the nature of prayer we must distinguish between prayer in its divine sense and the mere unconscious psychical action of irrelevant desire; for prayer may function on different planes,—it may be exalted or it may be abased. There is the prayer of animality, the prayer of intellectuality, and the spiritual prayer, and all are answered but only the last brings peace. When one says he never prays, he means that he never prays consciously—perhaps

never wisely. The prayer of weakness is answered in weakness, the prayer of folly in foolishness. Our very vacillation and indirectness saves us from much we might bring upon ourselves, for conflicting desires offset each other.

The mind is not contained within the skull but envelopes and surrounds the man, as does the corona the sun, and like the latter is of no permanent dimensions, but it expands and undulates, sending out jets of thought far into the mental atmosphere. The efficiency of prayers depends on the state of this mental envelope, for it is the ultimate and spiritualized function of thought to be the vehicle of prayer. As two minds may communicate at a distance in virtue of telepathy, through the medium of prayer the mind becomes *en rapport* with the Infinite and with the sum of all kindred minds. To be entirely absorbed in a single purpose is to become for the time a pool into which shall sweep the flood tide of the mind of humanity. When in this way an outlet is made, the supply will come as water seeks its level. What are termed the qualities have this attribute, that they tend to augment themselves through the force of attraction. Let a man countenance a little passion in himself and it is a bid for the like quality wherever it may exist,—a nucleus around which shall be deposited layer upon layer of the same. The possession of any quality is in itself a species of prayer, tempered and offset by differing qualities and modified by desires. Goodness is forever linking to itself goodness; charity is always attracting charity. Kindness calls the love out of men's hearts; and a perverse nature ransacks every mind with

which it comes in contact in its efforts to call out a similar disposition. The atmosphere with which we surround ourselves becomes in a measure the magnet of our destiny.

There is a steep gradient from the mere mental attitude and its attraction, and the play of thought, up to the ultimate step of which the individual is capable, the realization of direct contact of the Soul with the universal; and it is this, the spiritual office, that should perhaps alone be dignified with the name of prayer. Prayer so considered is spiritual activity; it is a power that touches the very springs of action and sets in motion the machinery of the heavens. It is here that we gather the scattered threads of diffusive thought and give singleness and direction to the spiritualized faculties, and prayer becomes the great uplifter and regenerator; it opens the doors from littleness to greatness, from weakness to strength. Cease your striving and pray, for prayer is the royal road to wisdom; but we must learn to pray wisely—to rise to the full heights of prayer. To recognize that life is prayer is to abjure triviality. The ability to control and direct the spiritual forces, to discern and keep well in mind the intent and bearing of all thought and action—in a word, the faculty of praying wisely—is the highest prerogative of spiritual manhood, and its possession the virile evidence of power. In this, its pure form, prayer is the short cut to the attainment of ideals, to which the methods of strife and outward effort are but blind trails. Only when we have become engrossed in the Soul, only when we are assured of the all-sufficiency of the divine relationship, may we utilize the spiritual forces of prayer.

THE NATURE OF PRAYER

The nature of spiritual prayer is dual; it is breathing and the air breathed; it is seeking and that which is sought. Thought and concentration, these are its vehicles; wisdom, truth, love—of such is its basis. It is the ultimate spiritual concept; it is a drawing of the Soul toward God,—the sublime expression of trust in that which is not seen. We may but reverently intimate the sublimity of this the bond between the Infinite and the Soul, for it is to be apprehended spiritually; the terms of three dimensions will not serve to express the fourth.

> "He prayeth best who loveth best
> All things both great and small;
> For the dear God who loveth us,
> He made and loveth all."

The mother's love for her child is a prayer that finds answer in the happiness and well-being of the child; and so is her fear a prayer of weakness that is none the less answered. The scholar's love of culture is a prayer that is answered in the advancement of learning; the artist's love of the beautiful, a prayer that finds answer in grace and perfection of form, in color and composition. The sun's love of the earth is a prayer that finds response in the beauty and sublimity of nature; and the Soul's love of God is the prayer of prayers which is answered by all that is ineffable and transcendent, and by the "peace of God which passeth understanding."

We shall divest prayer of its arbitrary character and see in it the working of law. Faith is the essential of spiritual prayer; the faith of the child who questions not his wants shall be supplied. Any shade or

variation from absolute faith vitiates prayer; and this may be shown in the nature of cause and effect, for assurance begets assurance, but from uncertainty comes no certainty. A prayer without assurance is a sum of additions and subtractions whose result may be zero. Its action may be compared to opposing forces that cancel each other. With all our disparagement of external acts of faith and of the objects of such faith, we yet cannot gainsay the marvelous efficacy of faith itself, for it works miracles despite the object on which it is pinned—be that never so trivial. The psychic activity directed toward bits of wood and stone has done what reputed science could not do; Lourdes is a fact! If faith in bread pills and rusty nails will produce results, how much more shall faith in God accomplish.

The rationale of prayer is clearly expressed in that profoundly logical query as to what man if his son ask bread would give him a stone. Why, indeed, if we ask for a fish should we look for a serpent? But we mar our destiny through seeking what we do not need and expecting that which we do not wish. Trust! Trust! How can there be life without faith? To doubt the goodness of God is to belie mother and father. When the Personal God no longer suffices we turn to the Immanent God; from separateness and duality to oneness and identity.

> "They reckon ill who leave me out;
> When me they fly, I am the wings."

It is the appointed order of human life to work from sense to reason, from reason to intuition; and so it is the nature of man to essay first his self-will

which is foolishness, but after weariness untold to be brought to the cognition of the Divine Will which is wisdom. The more we would strive to be and do of ourselves alone, the less have we to show of permanent and beneficent result. In the life of self-will the day comes when one by one every expedient shall have failed: then do we turn our thoughts within. "When matter is exhausted, spirit enters." Through all facts, experiences, visions, one ultimate fact shines supreme; this, namely, that being spirit we are in touch with the Infinite; that God has not left us but is within us, and to our awakening touch the Infinite responds. When we shall give free course to the love, the power, the wisdom which are around and within us, we shall be irresistibly impelled to all good ends. He who boldly lays claim to the real prerogatives of man which are spiritual, who elects henceforth to walk with God, shall be reinforced by Infinite Power and shall be wise by the communications of the Supreme Mind.

V. PRACTICAL IDEALISM

IF WE are to be utilitarian, let it be in a true and broad sense. Exclude not the Spirit which gives life; exclude not the beautiful, which has a vast bearing on life. Be true to the import of utilitarianism and utilize whatever is available. Men will not be content with electricity and compressed air and steam, but shall pass on to psychic forces and harness these. We may not stop short at action but shall deal with thought which precedes and conditions action. Invention has provided us no rapid transit; it is at best a snail's pace. We shall soon tire of creeping thus. A little less cultivation without: a little more within. Let us no longer be indifferent to real issues; inner forces, divine relationship—shall they be ignored? Let us infuse some daring into the utilitarian mind and essay the wings of the Spirit.

What, then, is utilitarianism? Is it something apart from art? Is it something separate from beauty, from the spiritual, the psychic, the occult? Then something apart from being and hence a figment. Let us pour new life into the old forms if we must still retain them. Let us lay aside our ancient history, our ancestral gods; let us be up and *thinking*. The vice is not utilitarianism, but it is that utilitarianism is faint-hearted,—mole-eyed. It would hitch up Dobbin but leaves Pegasus out to pasture; it invents spectacles but sees no visions. And now it would

prove that the Soul is immortal. But religion and inspiration come not so. The bread of life is not to be baked in loaves. He who must have algebraic demonstration of the Soul would not be greatly benefited by the proof.

The apostle of realism must first learn what is real; the advocate of might must know wherein is true power. So shall he come to deal with substance and not shadow, with the unseen often, rather than with the seen. In our effort to be practical let us be divinely practical—not stupidly so. Shall we then save our pennies and waste our thoughts; shall we bolt the house door and leave open the door of the mind; fumigate the dwelling and take no precaution against mental contagion? Shall we sit in our sun parlors, but exclude the blessed sunshine of love,—toast our feet and freeze our hearts? There comes a time when we must have done with symbols and consider the reality. Faith! Suggestion! Thought! These are the agents of a spiritual energy of which force is but the sign. To be deeply practical is to engage spiritual activities, to utilize the mind to which we are channels,—to let the tide run our mills; it is the ability to utilize occult affinities, to use to the utmost the cosmic force of love.

There is a spiritual hearing and a spiritual seeing. Five senses will not suffice; the utilitarian must needs have seven or more to develop his full capacity. The practical world once did without steam, once paid its bills in garden stuff—so much hay or potatoes for a pair of boots. And five senses shall presently be as inadequate as a currency of cowrie shells; we must have a more universal medium or be left in

the lurch. Gravity carries freight and moonshine will float ships. But there are forces more intangible than moonshine, and on this tide shall our ships come in. It was only necessary to liquefy air to reveal a new field of available energy; and the control of thought shall disclose the vast field of spiritual dynamics.

Here are those who claim to be healed by thought; others who run and leap because of faith. We have hugged our delusions and they have failed us; but these have found new delusions—it may be—and cannot contain their joy. It were well, perhaps, to forsake the old delusion for the new if such are its fruits. Let us brave the dragon of public opinion and see if here is not something we may utilize and thus add to our utilitarian category. What faith have we not put in ipecac and pills, and with what returns—O ye gods! They have stayed not the hand of the Lord. Shall the obituary column teach us nothing? A soul passing from some bedside every second of time and leaving there its house of clay—sad, mute commentary on the unavailing phials! What if, after all, the idealist has become more practical than we?

Strictly speaking, all men are in a sense idealists, far though they may be removed from sympathy with the spirit of idealism,—the difference lies in their ideals. Whatever in the mind stands for truth; whatever sum of ideas impresses itself as paramount; whatever concept is entertained of the existing order, is the ideal upon which it dances attendance,—be it never so sophistical. That which we actually believe to be the best of which the universe is capable,

such is our ideal,—such our present inspiration, or our damning limit. If our ideas are emotional rather than rational, so will be our lives. Vulgar ideals make vulgar people; fleshly ideals make sensualists. And the consecration of thought to transcendent ideals is responsible for poets and seers. The materialist is a man of material ideals and holds an ideal of himself as a thing of atoms,—of flesh and bones; his materialism is the outcome of this ideal of himself and of the universe. Men are influenced directly by that which they believe and not by what they would like to believe. We become optimists or pessimists according to the harmony or inharmony of our own minds. This, namely, that we work from ideals to externals,—specifically, that ideals are externalized in the body—is the psychology of the ideal, the practical aspect which distinguishes modern idealism. It is not the soul which grows but our realization of it merely, and it is this that constitutes development. Growth is the process of uncovering and bringing to light that which is, rather than any accretion from without. This process of discovering hidden truth—of uncovering the Soul—may be likened to a journey through well nigh impenetrable forests, seeing at rare intervals a fitful glimpse of the overarching blue, and plunging again into abysmal depths. And to us there come at times, as to Siegfried, the offspring of Wotan, strains of a sublime motive, awakening knowledge of the Soul's greatness,—intimations of a divine lineage.

Sanity does not consist in conformity to custom, nor to social precedents and human decrees, as such, but to whatsoever in these is in accordance with

truth. Sanity, out and out, is nothing less than parallelism with truth. It alters not the case that our departure is conventional; the results of aberrant thought are always evident. One unfortunate bethinks himself a god and is taken to the asylum; but many another made in the spiritual image of God dubs himself a miserable bit of clay. Unsoundness of a certain kind is prevalent wherever men are not true to God and to the brotherhood of man; and every man is still unbalanced who perceives not his own divinity. Oh, for the divine physician who shall cast out these devils from our consciousness; for the spiritual mind which shall bring us peace; for the tonic of pure thought which shall make us whole!

Idealism *per se* never attains the fatal dignity of a system; it is always somewhat undefined and open to further accessions of truth. It is rather a spiritual bias and predilection—a refined clay, plastic in the hands of every age, which, whenever the time is ripe, is molded to the form of some philosophic system. The philosophy of the ideal is indeed older than history; idealism was already venerable when writing was invented. But it has now come upon practical times and received a new investiture, a new value; and its gift to this age is the science of mental therapeutics.

This budding science, classed by the unthinking as a kind of astrology or necromancy, is perhaps the astrological stage of an exact science destined to revolutionize all therapeutic systems. It starts with the premise—and this premise at least was known to Swedenborg—that the members of the body are correspondences, their various functions symbolic

of the spiritual office, and not in themselves final; eye and ear of an inner vision and hearing; hands and feet of certain faculties; sex of the creative principle; head, torso, limbs, all corresponding to the spiritual man. And this has given rise to an experimental psychology that shall be of use outside of the schoolroom. Hitherto has psychology been milk for babes; here is meat for strong men. Opposite our category of emotions we must now write a corresponding list of effects. Here are grief, fear, anger, hatred and the rest arising in the mind, and far from vanishing into thin air, our psychology reveals that they act directly to derange the functions of heart, lungs, stomach and liver. Here again are love, trust, joy and serenity acting to produce normal conditions and to sustain the body in health. Here, then, is the remedy for the effects of false emotion; where fear has deranged, love will restore. And through force of pure logic we are constrained to admit that false emotion and wrong ideals are responsible for pathologic conditions. We read in the earliest scriptures that it was then an old rule that hatred was overcome by love, never by hatred; and now it appears that anger and hatred are productive of poison in the blood, and true to the old rule, this is overcome by the current of love. There is a certain sympathy and co-relation between the advance of physical science and this new psychology—strange bed-fellows though they may be. Science demonstrates telepathy, and this becomes at once the vehicle of this idealism, the winged Mercury of this therapeutic Jove—the emissary from the rational to the erring consciousness. Again the intuitive

perception of the idealist is corroborated by the chemist analyzing the blood under stress of various negative emotions, for lo! there are the poisonous products corresponding to each and every one. When before did chemistry reveal facts so momentous—big with revolution and the downfall of hoary systems.

It is precisely because of the revelations of this transcendental psychology that ontology is become the basis of idealism, and that present idealism is so largely metaphysical, for the demonstrated effects of thought and emotion serve to emphasize the vital character of the science of Being. We must know entity, essence and substance, not as abstractions, but as means of life, as targets for thought. Whether good or evil, order or chaos obtains,—whether evil exists at all,—shall not be a matter of sentiment but of metaphysics. And it is in its metaphysics that our idealism stands most indebted to the past: its psychology is the child of this vigorous century. So in this marvelous coming age our *lares et penates* is to be a volume of metaphysics and a treatise on mental therapeutics in place of the old family medicine book.

The ground on which we stand is derived from earlier formations, from prehistoric lands, but sand is sand and clay is clay, whether they figure in secondary or in tertiary rocks. The Rocky Mountains are journeying piecemeal to the sea, there to lay down new strata of the old, old material which doubtless shall be re-elevated and become the territory of future races. And so do the grains of truth of an Archean metaphysics constantly figure in newer formations. If we briefly examine into the philosophical grounds of this idealism, we are made

sensible first of the influence of the Upanishads declaring the inner Self—absolute and unconditioned; the venerable Aryan doctrine of nescience; and the perception of the Self as the basis of freedom and happiness. And so does our idealism inculcate a rather modified and practical Yoga,—a relating of the consciousness to the real, and a concentration of thought thereon; in other words, the assumption and maintenance of a God-consciousness. Here are none of the externals of Christianity but much of the cherished teaching of Jesus, proclaiming the relation of man to the Father, the efficacy of love, and of faith,—the necessity for spiritual living. Never since the days of the primitive Church has such unqualified allegiance been offered to the glorious spirit of that man's teaching as is manifest in the idealism of today; never before has his life and work been brought home to us with equal fervor and made so real, so tangible, so very present. And for this reason, if for no other, this day would leave its radiant mark on history; this page would be turned down for future reference. As for the rest, it is perhaps not overstating it to say that idealism must always be indebted to Plato; that here is some trace of the broader principles of the Stoics, though none of their self-limitation. Here also the *à priori* knowledge and intuitionalism of Kant and of the Transcendentalists, God, freedom, and immortality,—now as then. Here also Swedenborg's doctrine of Correspondences, or its counterpart. But here is something more substantial than the visions of Plotinus. Here are no howling dervishes, as some would have it, foaming at the mouth and walking over the

bodies of infants. As we glance backward through the long vista of years—over idealism in its many phases to Vedic times, when kings sat at the feet of wise men—we perceive that it everywhere reverts to one common source—the Soul.

In the nature of a composite it assuredly now is—but it is more than this. It has focused many benign rays but has caught some further effects of the spectrum as well. The watchword today is *application*; it would make of itself an applied science. The hidden doctrine is made public. The fragments gathered here and there it has fitted together with fair accuracy, and has builded a firm foundation. This stability has it secured, and thus potent are its facts, that, whereas the idealist was once a crank and with difficulty adjusted himself to life, he who lives in this present idealism fares somewhat better than other men; his mind is clearer, his eye brighter and his step more elastic. If men do not apprehend the peculiar tenor of his views, they still recognize that he has somewhat that they have not, an assurance born of trust,—a freedom which they lack; and they attribute it doubtless to destiny, or luck, or inheritance and temperament. But it is truth alone which shall make us free, and a very little lends us wings. Here is a little philosophy well rounded at any rate, for it treats of *man*—not of fingers and toes merely, but of man in his essence and in his entirety; of man the spirit, and his garment the mind, and his outer garment the body—and of the relation and dependence of the outer upon the inner.

This is the mark, then, by which the idealism of

these times shall be known, that it aims to be practical, that it is the friend of the present, of the eternal Now. It has asserted for itself an individuality in this radical departure from medieval and recent idealism, for it is not content to hope merely,—it would realize. It asks believing that it has received. It is no postponement, no mere glimpse of a future bliss that bids us put up with present ills; but it would have us see that now is the accepted time, and demands of us regeneration to the end that we may uncover the Soul and shed its luster upon these present conditions. It claims to bake bread; it is applied or nothing. And who shall say it is not exacting,—as truth is exacting. It demands first a moral cure; if the eye offend, pluck it out. It says wisdom conditions happiness; therefore first be wise. It delves deep and lays its finger on the diseased spot in mind. Cut out the moral cancer; give a tonic for the mental debility; build up the understanding. It deals with cause first, last, and always; and this is its paramount claim to practicality. It has evolved a system of spiritual economics; it is a moral disciplinarian, an ethical martinet. If man is spirit, then no patching and painting of the exterior will set him on the right road; as well sew up the crater of a volcano with intent to stop an eruption. He must get into alignment with truth—with the facts of being. If the consciousness is warped, straighten it out. If man has related himself to the seeming, bring him back to the real; put him in touch with his divine source and God will work miracles through him.

This idealism is accused of some extravagances;

and why not, since we may have a metaphysical as well as a theological dogmatism. But a sifting process is ever at work. We need but give an extremest rope enough. Men have always been a little fearful lest truth were not self-sustaining; and all systems receive a vast deal of boosting and propping which their truth needs not at all, and which is ever inadequate to uphold their tottering error. It is a puny truth indeed that needs our vociferations. The roots of a practical idealism are permeating many institutions and modes of living. Physical culture assumes a new basis and its enlightened advocates address themselves to the mental action as the governing principle in physical exercise; and so with voice culture. A psychological basis is found for the kindergarten and the young idea is taught to shoot with definite aim. Wherever its roots reach, there is the ground stirred, there begins a new life,—a new activity. The "advanced movement" of every age is the bantling of great idealism. And now from the rock of truth has it made its imperative call,—there "raised high the perpendicular hand in America's name."

VI. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THOUGHT

WE STAND so nearly upon the border of the unseen world that, though prone to deny its very existence, we must commonly express the material in terms of the immaterial—as when we speak of the "weight" of a body we must express it as a measure of gravity,—that is to say, in terms of *force*—inappreciable by the senses.

Energy is known to the senses by its effect only, and the more available the form of energy the less crude is its embodiment. In the progress of the arts we work first with that which appeals to the five senses, but through the refining action of mind we deal eventually with force direct. Now, as the efficiency of refined oil is superior to that of a tallow dip, or as gas is superior to oil, or electricity to gas—so is that subtle energy known as *thought* more potent than electricity.

Yesterday the vast efficiency of electricity went for nothing; today the mind has harnessed the intangible and commands the unseen. We whisper across the Atlantic; we put an ear to the ground and hear the voice of the world. The schoolboy reads of the modern miracles of Edison and of Roentgen, and dozes over the book whose simple statement would have confounded Newton. The child that rides in a trolley car, speaks through a telephone, and can prove the earth is round, passes judgment on

the world that arraigned Galileo. And, wise in our day and generation, we would now stand for something incontrovertible. But no! The flood has swept the place where we stood yesterday and shall cover the ground whereon we now stand. We shall presently see that nothing is stable; that only Being *is*. We are working from the circumference to the center—from the seeming to the real; and from the dark caverns of the human mind the bats are flitting silently before the light. That which is ridiculed one day becomes axiomatic the next. Today we burn witches, and tomorrow attend seances. Witness, then, how relative are all things—for it is not the light we have seen, but its reflection in the myriad mirrors of the mind; and no man presents a plane mirror but such as have all degrees of curvature, both concave and convex—and all images are distorted.

The child of the future shall marvel at the reputed wisdom of this day; and as we read with incredulity of that Roman Catholic world that declared the earth was flat, so shall he read in pitying wonder of those races of men that builded great nations, possessed a vast commerce, were skilled in the arts—yet failed to perceive the significance of thought.

Men talk vaguely of the ideal and the real: one for poet and one for banker. But the ideal is the only real, and, as we shall learn, is alone practical. Let us have done with the false distinction—it is the real and the unreal that confront us. Here is a practical age, and common sense is greatly esteemed; but our common sense is oftenest nonsense. It is the *un*common sense that should be made common:

the sense to perceive and hold fast the real. Stocks and bonds—a princely income—seem real and substantial; but a lack of confidence—a *thought* of fear—enters the minds of men, and that value, apparently so solid and enduring, vanishes into thin air. The thought alone remains. The eloquent speaker to whom we listen today is gone tomorrow; but his thought lives and bears fruit.

Thought is a living, active force; it is a mode of vibration whose rate is not yet ascertained; it is the thunderbolt of Jove, and its action is irrevocable. As we think, so are we. The condition of the body is the mathematical resultant of the parallelogram of thought forces; so is the condition of the money market; so is the world; and so is every man's life:

"All that we are is the result of what we have thought; it is founded on our thoughts; it is made up of our thoughts. If a man speaks or acts with an evil thought, pain follows him, as the wheel follows the foot of the ox that draws the carriage. . . . If a man speaks or acts with a pure thought, happiness follows him, like a shadow that never leaves him."

In the control and direction of thought lies the method of true reform, which deals with causes, not effects; it opens the way to individual emancipation and progress, and the regeneration of society shall follow, but no convention, no mass-meeting will avail; it is a question for the individual—a silent reform. It is love in the heart and corresponding thoughts in the mind that shall bring peace on earth. A little observation shows that the mind projects its thought upon the world's canvas; the canvas is nothing, but the thought merits our profound consideration.

We are "out of sorts," and all men and events appear to be at cross purposes; we are in a cheerful frame of mind, and the whole world seems to rejoice. We may trace the thought of anger or fear to its deleterious effect upon the body; its action is unfailing,—and we may as surely witness the wholesome influence of benign thoughts. The prevailing thoughts and aspirations of the men and women of today shall be factors in the mental caliber, temperament, and moral status of the children of tomorrow—and the explanation of many unlooked-for proclivities. A present devotion to art, a love of the beautiful, and the worship of truth—all shall bear fruit in the coming race. Joy or despondency, purity or sensuality—whichever is propitiated shall become the fairy godmother of our children. The mothers of this day are shaping the destinies of the men of the future; and to the emancipation of women must we look for the elevation of the race. The teeming population of the globe is truly one family, and the thought and influence of each member are communicated *ad infinitum*. No man shall so much as in thought contribute to the degradation of woman but he weaves a dark thread in the life of races yet to be born.

This perplexing problem of disease finds its only solution in the relation that exists between mind and body. We ask ourselves why the majority of men pass out of this life through the agency of disease; why it is so exceptional to hear of a "natural death"; why so seldom a perfectly normal and sound body? And there is but one logical answer: The body is built by the mind, and it is the departure from truth—

it is erroneous thinking that causes bodily imperfection and disease. Disease is not a thing in itself; it is not a "roaring lion seeking to devour," but merely a register, an indicator, of mental error. A mind perfectly controlled and directed ever upon the truth will produce a normal body and maintain it in a state of equilibrium, which is health. It is *fear* that is contagious, not disease; it is fear that spreads epidemics. The fearless are invulnerable.

The sweet, cool breeze that rustles the poplar leaves and comes laden with the scent of clover and new-mown hay; the gentle rain that is life to tree and flower and every blade of grass; the most microscopic and lowly form of life—in one and all is seen the possible messenger of death, invested with strange power to sweep us from the earth. We are taught that nothing is so insignificant but it may become the agent of desolation; the very elements are in conspiracy against the life of humanity. Is this God's world, then, and can these things be?

The fact is, we are still animistic in our beliefs; we are still adherents of a crude and primitive naturism that bows to malignant powers in the air and water. It has no doubt been somewhat convenient to have this scapegoat of malicious drafts and dampness and bacteria upon which to shift the responsibility of our ills—for it is a humiliating circumstance, this publishing abroad our various failings in distorted bodies: our unruly tempers and surly dispositions, our egotism and selfishness, our craven fears and our lack of equanimity and trust—but it is a convenience for which we pay dear. We are so many aborigines, with our wind devil and our

rain devil; but we may no longer shirk the responsibility of our own thoughts.

Right thinking is the key to health and happiness; wrong thinking the cause of misery and disease. Herein lies the genius of the coming age—the cornerstone of modern metaphysics, which renders worthless all scholastic systems and inaugurates an era of applied and practical philosophy: a philosophy of love, which finds its application in the uplifting of human ideals, in the betterment of human conditions, and in the demonstration of the supremacy of spirit and the reign of law,—an application too far-reaching, a basis too broad, to be contained within the bounds of sect or school.

In the name of religion, what crimes have not been perpetrated? She has been a Juggernaut in her demand for human victims. Nor are the days of the Inquisition yet over. There is a *silent* inquisition—an inquisition of pernicious dogma, whose workings are secret and unrecognized and whose dread decrees have wrought sorrow in the land. Hosts have succumbed in fear of it—of its unending and horrid hells; of the damnation of little children, the pure flowers of humanity; of a literal day of judgment, awaited in terror by the timid and sensitive. Such dogma has been in many a fair blossom the canker-worm that let it fall untimely to the ground. It is the letter that kills. The day of judgment shall never "come"—it *is;* there is a tribunal set up within every man; he is judged of his thought, and his body gives evidence whether it be of love or of fear.

The mind is a loom—incessantly weaving; and thoughts, good and true or idle and vicious, are the

warp and woof of that fabric the mind weaves, and which we call our lives. Men weave side by side, nor see what the result shall be. One weaves a Cashmere shawl; another but a bit of patchwork. But all must weave, and the thread is free—be it fine or coarse, silk or cotton. To choose thread that shall be fine yet enduring, colors that shall be delicate yet bright and harmonious, designs of strength and symmetry—such is the province of the skilled weaver.

Our thoughts have grown old; we no longer run and leap. The Greek youth apes the manners of a Frenchman and lolls in the café; but the Parthenon stands an eloquent reminder of the days when men perceived more clearly the eternal youth of the Soul and embodied its perfection. All the world goes to copying the Venus de Milo or the Psyche of Capua, as if youth and beauty had been entombed with Phidias and Praxiteles, to rise no more.

It is recorded in the Vedas that time was when the mountains were winged and flew about; but Indra clipped their wings, whereupon the mountains settled down upon the earth while their wings remained floating above them as clouds. So the youth goes forth in the strength and vigor of a mind untrammeled, and sees that all things are for him to conquer—nor sets bounds to his winged thoughts; but presently the Indra of this world clips his wings, and the middle-aged man settles down with the weight of a mountain, anchors himself firmly by his senses, and wonders how long it will be before he shall get underground altogether.

We dwell in a world of thought. These vagrants—

we know not whence they come; which is our thought and which another's? The home is sacred; we reserve the right to say who may enter and who may not. Shall it be otherwise, then, with the mind? The mind is holy; it is a temple. Alas, that it should be entered irreverently. "When thought is purified, then the Self arises;" and the mind, purged of all that is unlovely or untrue, shall radiate serenity and beneficence.

VII. CHARACTER AND ITS EXPRESSION

ENDLESS are the marks of identification we carry about us, whether the insignia of rank, or mental scars and birthmarks. The evidences of our present outlook—the impress of the restless mind upon the plastic clay—are written all over the man, and head, face and hands are pages on which are crowded hieroglyphics, or which are still left blank. Here is a vacant space where knowledge shall one day put her seal and stamp the indelible lines,—furrows of insight between the brows. Command is written in a nose, resistance in a chin, and lust or sweetness in a mouth. Look to the chin for bulldog pertinacity but to the brow and nose for the sign of the cloud-compelling, irresistible, god-like character. Look to the high cheek bones for the Indian fighter, but to the firm and furrowed, yet serene and smiling mouth, for the poise which marks the self-conqueror, the invincible. As a man carries his burdens, so does he carry himself, erect or bowed over; as he controls or is controlled, so does he stride or shamble; as he holds his head, such assurance has he in himself; and according as his perception is small or great does he grope in his walk or move with the sanguine and unshaken confidence of one who trusts.

We are autobiographers one and all; writing volumes in our eyes and mouths, recording the history of the past and predictions for the future. That

which we would not tell another he is reading in our eyes; that of which we are unaware is betrayed in the shape of the head. Promise yet unfilled is inscribed upon the brow; the shadows of the past are still shadows on the face. Here are truth, sincerity, repose, shining in these eyes, a beacon to all who may scan the human face; here are kindliness and beneficence speaking from these silent lips. One says in an off moment that he cannot, but his thumbs know better and proclaim the indomitable will. The knotty hands bespeak the philosophic mind, the tapering fingers reveal the love of art. We may look into the upturned faces in a crowd and read the history of civilization from savagery to refinement. There are faces that bear the impress of the Iron Age; faces that still have the stamp of the Stone Age, and those that would seem to lick their chops and snarl. And there are faces that are a load-stone to our virtues and draw forth the pith and marrow of our excellence; faces that command us to stand erect; faces that bid us be happy.

We continually set a value upon ourselves in everything we do. Here are we ensconced behind a mask of flesh, as a theater stands behind the posters that advertise what manner of performance is taking place within, whether tragedy or comedy. To write your name is to publish your present worth and your deficiency. The pen is the veriest telltale and hastens to write down the caliber and distinction of the mind that directs it, and to announce its secret foibles; runs up-hill or down, hops and skips or plays the laggard, crosses t's or omits them, writes coarse or fine, forms every letter and makes every dot and

dash in accordance with the bent of this same mind. In our letter we forward unwittingly our credentials to friend and stranger, expressing the amplitude of our vibration, the measure of our content, our hopes, our equanimity. There are letters that are colorless, that have no luster and never sparkle even in the kindliest light, and to receive such a flabby missive is like shaking a clammy hand; there are others that are full of force and originality and breathe vitality and good-will; others that bristle with idiosyncrasies. Some letters are messengers of hope,—bright joyous airs suddenly striking upon the ear; and some are like a discordant note,—scratchy, wheezy, complaining lines. There are men whose every letter enriches our thought and is like a glimpse of some fair garden; they waft the perfume of heliotrope and mignonette, and we fancy we have seen the gleam of hummingbirds in the climbing honeysuckle.

The voice is one envoy of character that represents us at the court of the world. Deep, full and sonorous, it carries conviction, commands and assures; blustering and noisy, it betokens latent coarseness; smooth and polished, reveals the diplomat. A sincere jovial voice rings true, and is the sweetest music to the ear. We hear voices that are weary and voices that are sad; athletic voices, and voices with lame backs; elementary voices—those that express mental diffusion and incoherence; others concentrated as lye. Listen, and we shall hear the animal affinities speaking through the voice,—whining, growling, purring, cackling. There are voices that are even and balanced and tell of stable equilibrium; tones eloquent and persuasive; tones that are full of sympathy and

which soothe and caress. Others there are that when they have ceased it is to feel that an angel has passed our way. But it is when we laugh that we are taken unawares. Some men seldom if ever laugh aloud, and there are those whose laugh is hollow and mirthless. A certain laugh betrays moral disintegration, and there is that again which sounds clear and reinforcing as the taps of a hammer, and builds for us a little sound palace of merriment. Sweet is the contagion of a benign smile and a genial laugh.

But where indeed may we draw the line, for the very cobblestones have tongues and walls have ears. "Wear at the toe, spend as you go; wear at the heel, spend a great deal." What character in a well-worn pair of boots, eloquent of the dignity of their owner, or bespeaking frivolity, or plain, unvarnished sense! In shaking hands is discovered somewhat of the mind's complexion,—for a man either gives or withholds himself in his salutation and in either case betrays his attitude, and for the moment his temperament ekes out at his fingers' ends and pervades you through your arm,—sanguine or despondent, electric or phlegmatic. The clasping of hands is always a contact of the poles of two batteries, from which ensues attraction or repulsion according to the conditions. In our tastes, our pursuits, our clothes, do we still publish ourselves; our very ailings herald us and announce wherein we are warped and crooked.

But these indications are but straws which reveal the direction of the prevailing winds; for so impermanent are we in these our growing days that we would seem to be no one person, but one today and

another tomorrow, and the body a receptacle in which to exhibit various stages of growth. Here is an epicure turned Stoic; there a cynic become optimist, a materialist transformed and spiritualized, a roué turned parson,—one man of many minds no less than many men of many minds. We disown that man we were ten years since; we marvel at the views we once held and at the aspect life once presented. How is it possible we thought as we did then? Then we would have asked could it be possible for us to think as we do now. Shifting! Changing! Evolving! Mists taking shape, worlds resolving themselves out of the nebulous mass of undeveloped, misty, vaporous thought: such are the minds of men. How long, through what eons, must the mass continue whirling and surging before it takes shape, before it becomes a sphere, begins to cool, to assume an identity of its own and become amenable to higher ends? But through it all is seen the hand at the potter's wheel, molding and shaping—a man.

We are wont to think of how intimately we know our friend when in fact we know him hardly at all, nor any one—not even ourselves. Character we know and recognize in a degree, but to read character out and out is to perceive but a dim reflection of the Soul. All these years we have walked and talked together and have come but little nearer save in an outward and personal sense. The son is an enigma to the father and the father to the son; husband and wife, brother and sister, all seemingly unrelated and unrevealed one to the other. Our friend dwells beside us a perpetual mystery, and we never fathom his secret nor he ours. He is like a house with whose

exterior we are familiar but whose inmate we have never seen. Occasionally a light has flashed from the windows, and then we have watched and it has been dark for days; but still we are led to anticipate that some time it shall be brightly and continuously illumined. On rare instances sweet melodies have been wafted abroad from within the house; again, there have been long periods of silence, or the ears have been assailed by din and hubbub.

It requires character to read character. Superficially we are all things to all men despite ourselves. One considers us taciturn, another loquacious; to some we have seemed clever and to others dull. Because of these ideals we have cherished, one calls us visionary, another, wise and prophetic. Every man gages us by himself. A rogue believes all men are rascals; and moral weakness excuses mankind on the same ground. But a Parsifal sees no rascality in any one, for the pure see all things purely. In our own eyes we are every one a chronometer to other men's watches.

The boon companion of youth meets us in middle age and we are as far apart as the antipodes and no longer have any common ground on which to stand. We may never expect that all men shall call us good, for some will persist in calling us villain, and the companions of our weakness will disparage our strength. But in spite of what we may appear to the world we are yet something different. Let the world vote on any man and he would have as many aspects as there were votes and still would be none of these but something more, for no one can fully take our measure but must use what measuring-stick he has.

We take our estimate of the persons of history from the slim evidence of their biographies, but were we to have talked with the men themselves we would have received a different impression, and could we have seen the secret workings of the mind, a different one still. A man's contemporaries give one verdict and posterity another, and neither is complete. To understand greatness we must be great; to fully comprehend Shakespeare we must possess the mind of Shakespeare; and to appreciate the motives which prompt a thief, it is doubtless necessary to have somewhat of the thieving propensity. Every quality appeals to its prototype within us; the heroic to our heroism, the noble to our nobleness, the base to our baseness.

Who is competent to judge Cæsar save Cæsar himself, and he is unequal to the task. When we judge another we pass judgment upon ourselves; to condemn another is to utter our own condemnation. We are as noble today as our ideals, and tomorrow it may be we shall transcend these; we are as great as our idea of God,—and just as little. We are judged of no one, then, save the truth, and though we are not yet able to affirm the sum and magnitude of our identity, we can none the less depose as to that which we are not. We are not this weak and complaining person nor this sick and repining one that we may seem to be; not this vacillating, indefinite, pusillanimous creature, nor this vain and boastful one, nor yet this narrow and self-centered man. These are but the guises our thoughts have worn. But as immeasurable freedom exists, then are we free; as virtue exists, so do we partake of it; as love

exists, so are we of it. Whatever *is*, of that we partake; whatever is seeming we but temporarily reflect. It is given us to prove what we are, and character is the present measure of our soul-realization. It is the little leaven working in this batch of dough, and shall after a time leaven the whole mass. It is an aura that precedes us and is felt rather than reasoned about; it is a nimbus that makes our presence radiant. And yet my character is not I but only the mark of my present recognition of my Self,—the forerunner of my greatness. We shall put the mark higher presently and give greater token of the hidden store. Character admonishes us that we are approaching the Soul, as the green branches floating on the water were evidence to Columbus that he was nearing land—the undiscovered country. So across the sea of our separation do we waft these green tokens one to another.

Who shall estimate the value of that character we have! To be a friend to oneself is to be in harmony with the spirit of truth and to perceive an infinite friendliness; but be your own enemy, and where shall you find any friend? We stand or fall by ourselves. In the emergency only that measure of inner force we possess shall avail; then it is that every outward support would seem to slip away and we are left alone,—so much reliance, such a degree of faith, so great a realization of the good that lies in everything, with which to confront the specter that has appeared. Our true thoughts our good angels are and shall come forth majestically and sustain us.

Society ranks men according to their years, assuming they should be so wise or foolish at thirty,

and so much the wiser at fifty. But age as a measure of wisdom is far from keeping pace with the years, and there may glance from the eye of a babe that which shall no more be seen until the call to depart has clarified the vision. There is little connection between the span of years and the true age of man. We are old with reference to our understanding and not according to our years, and a cynic of seventy reveals to what little purpose the summers and winters may come and go. Some men are born old and others trundle hoops to the end of their days. Gray beards are wagging in the nursery of the world, while children sit in the company of the wise; so little is worldly wisdom commensurate with understanding; so often does experience signify familiarity with mistakes, so frequently are white hairs the truce flag of the misspent years. Thought matures and judgment ripens through living deeply rather than by living long. How do the stagnant years creep on apace, but there are moments that come as the light-winged messenger of the gods, swift-flying to the heart—an impulse divine!

As to *self-made* men, where is there a man who is not self-made if made at all? Every man makes or unmakes himself. To throw advantages in his way unmakes him who is not ready to profit by them; but the more obstacles he overcomes of himself the more does he make of himself. As though money made a man,—a man of snow indeed! It takes character to make a man, and where shall we find character, or where shall we buy it? What if we have not inherited the bluest blood? To persist in doing good is to become ennobled; and it is better

to be the founder of a royal line than the degenerate descendant of kings. Our family dates back as far as the oldest—even to the ape—and its history in common with that of all families is better unwritten.

Floating, not drifting, buoyed up by the water of life, carried onward by the stream of progress, thus have we come. Listening to the murmuring of the living water, sometime conscious of its enfolding touch—all through the night we floated; in the darkness of the night we were carried over the rapids, whirling, twisting, dashing,—through the eddies and the whirlpools—still we floated, we did not sink. Now we move out into the day, and the night is left behind; so tempestuous—yet certain is the evolution of character. It takes mind to make a man, and the science of increasing the mind, of pushing on day by day beyond the present limit, of extending the mental horizon and acquiring more and more mind, is the process of becoming self-made. We are provided with plans for a noble structure and left to execute them at our own sweet will. The wise observe us narrowly whether our success be real or a show merely, and if with riches, position, fame, we have acquired not understanding and are still unstable and discontent, we but add to the sum of human negation.

Character enjoins independence of thought and action; it is never deceived by numbers—is never a time server. So does it entail non-conformity, and while deferred to in the abstract is misunderstood in the particular. When we start to think for ourselves the impulse carries us on a tangent. Presently we find it is not good to go so alone, and we fall into a new orbit about humanity as a center—

but an orbit without, and vastly greater than the old one. We pose with ourselves as philosophers only to find we have passed in the world for cranks, but the Infinite repays whatever faith we put in ourselves, and we have but to declare our leadership to have men fall in line. We shall find the test of our convictions among those who have no conception of our ideals, our plan of life; we must step from the assurance of privacy into the arena where we are regarded with wonder and curiosity, and still retain our dignity and composure. We shall cherish still our vision of truth though men call it vagary; still repeat our axioms though they are scoffed at as theories, for by their fruits shall they be known.

VIII. THE BEAUTY OF POISE

IN MEETING successfully the issues of life as they present themselves, it is incumbent upon all men to defer to the principles which underlie their being and the spiritual laws which constitute the framework of the great structure of life, and to live so in accordance therewith that the demands of a true life are complied with. There is a penalty attached to all incompleteness; ignore the claim of the Spirit and life becomes dry and barren; spurn the intellect and it becomes besotted; condemn the body and the consciousness of matter becomes morbid, and impedes the healthy growth of the mind.

Life is not a riddle without an answer, nor is it a cipher whose key is lost. The elements of life are writ in every soul; the fundamental laws may be apprehended by every mind, or rather by that state of mind attainable to mankind through growth and enlightenment. Given these elements and the will to parallel the direction of law and life resolves itself into lines which are grandly simple. We shall concern ourselves with neither past nor future, but we are required to do justice to the present. The uncertainties and complexities of existence are not due to qualities inherent in life, but to the error of minds yet undeveloped, which heeding not the laws of spirit are lost in the maze of the pseudo-laws of matter. Man is primarily spirit, and he may essay

his departure from a material basis only at the expense of his higher faculties and to the detriment of moral stability and mental serenity. It is decreed we shall live wisely or attest the discrepancy in mind and body, and in the environment, condition and circumstance which we thereby attract; and that attestation is made sadly enough by the hosts of the criminals and the insane, by every form of mental aberration and disease, by all intemperance and excess, and by all inability to cope with the exigencies of daily life and retain the sweetness and serenity of a normal existence.

Poise is a perception of what is real and what unreal; it is breadth and scope and a due regard for all right aspects of life. We shall give and receive, both hear and speak, think and act; we shall court the inspiration of solitude no less than the invigoration of society. It supplies a compensating quality to genius that shall prevent that too great energy in one direction which results in general unfitness; working always toward general efficiency it takes genius as the nucleus around which to build a symmetrical character. It is in no sense physical and temperamental but rather intuitive and perceptive; it is a spiritual attribute arising from the recognition of inner forces,—a self-trust based on self-knowledge, which illumines the understanding and gives to its possessor that grasp of life which marks him always a center around which lesser minds shall gravitate. And it proclaims itself in that nice adjustment of the mental machinery that eliminates friction, in that breadth of intellect that gives a just appreciation of reason and imagination, of theory

and practice,—a robust faith in possibility as well as a calm judgment of fact; in that belief in the good heart of mankind that makes one tolerant and kind, that perception of the Soul within all men that makes one hopeful and serene; and by that generalship of the forces within that admits of no surprises from without. To the poised mind there are no happenings.

He who has found the Soul has found God. Thenceforth he builds on the rock of truth and no gale shall overthrow his house. He looks from within outward, from cause to effect; is not disturbed by the passing show but views it calmly from the vantage-ground of being. He sees in phenomena but the fleeting shadows of the mind, and devoted to truth and the substance of things is not deeply concerned with the shadow.

Being implies love and truth and joy; it implies unity and is the refutation of duality, of evil and death. Spirit is the essence of every individual life. It stands back of every mind, and would speak through all men—in harmony and melody, in poetry and prose, in marble and bronze, and in iron and steel. Poetry, art, music,—and the beautiful which is all of these,—are not ends in themselves but are phases of being, and every mind that lies open to the influx of the divine mind shall show forth these things; shall reflect the glory of God in harmony, in rhythm and in color. It shall attest its allegiance to divine law in spiritual insight which is wisdom, in mental equilibrium which is sanity, in bodily poise which is health.

Poise implies self-reliance, and the true self-reliance is a reliance upon the divinity within. In

our zeal for truth we run hither and thither—must listen to the exponent of every new creed, read every new book, and look here and there and everywhere for that which lies within our own selves. But the kingdom of heaven is within, not without; never for us in another's mind, never to be seen through another's vision. The utmost that sage or seer can do is to lead us to ourselves; to be the clear pool wherein we shall behold our own true image, that seeing we may go on our way rejoicing, henceforth to see with our own eyes and to walk with our own feet. We reverence the perception of such minds as Plato's and Emerson's, but fail to perceive that their greatness lay, not in heeding what other men said, but in giving ear to the oracle within themselves. They looked within; we gape at the emptiness without. They are lenses which reveal to us the suns and systems of our being; and this because they but focus the rays to which they give free passage. Witness, then, the lesson of every life truly great,—it is the Spirit which availeth, and its communications are sufficient unto every soul. We may not measure our growth by the theories and opinions to which we assent, but by the realization of God within us.

And so it is with books. We stand like instruments, awaiting the right touch and ready to respond in the majesty of harmony to the master hand. We are the sensitive strings that shall resound joyously in myriad overtones to the dominant chord of a true and ringing thought. This is the value of a book, that its thought shall make us vibrate; and not to read is to become unresponsive like a neglected

instrument—to lose the feeling and sympathetic quality of tone. Such is the purpose of reading, to strike a true note, that the overtones shall respond, and within us may resound a higher octave than ever before, perchance a deeper one; the spiritual range is extended, the gamut of heart and intellect increased, and impelled to search the deeps within; new visions of truth and beauty arise before us, and life assumes noble and majestic proportions; we are in touch with the One Mind, and we too shall utter truths.

That which is true of books is true of all education, which should aim to lead out rather than to pour in,—to unfold the possibilities of the mind, to develop capacity to act, to work, and to *think* originally. To this end, and as a means only, the study of another's thought serves as a discipline, a training, a suggestion—it may be an incentive and an inspiration; as a means it is a stepping-stone to self-development, but considered as an end it proves a stumbling-block to original thought. And hence the not rare anomaly of men of much learning and but little wisdom, and of unlettered men of profound insight; of polished men of shallow views, and of men of rough exterior and deep, rugged thoughts. Life is a school of self-development where progress is proportionate to the tithe paid in thought or deed to the general good. Genius is the evidence of true education in some direction, and always creates and gives of itself. Pseudo-education takes in much and contributes little, like those Nevada lakes which perpetually absorb, but from which no cooling stream ever flows to refresh the parched and arid land.

We yet live in a somewhat scholastic age. Alma

Mater lays her injunction upon every little mind, that it shall not deviate from the course she has prescribed, nor depart from the traditions and superstitions of the institution. She is under that fatality which inheres in conservatism of conserving error as well as truth; and she threatens loss of caste to every true Liberal. She demands of the physician that he wear the badge of some school of medicine and close his ears to all innovation; of the clergyman that he renounce freedom of thought and speak in accordance with specific creed and dogma; and she places her restriction upon the scholar that deference to literary form and style shall blind him to the expression of truth in homely garb, and upon the scientist that the tyrant intellect should mask the heart of the man.

It is an indication of true education to have renounced allegiance to the institution and the servile deference to the authority of men and names; it is another to have outgrown prejudice and to accord a welcome to truth wherever it may be found, and it is significant of much that passes for education that the awakened mind must set itself industriously to *un*learn the once prized knowledge of the world. Self-unfoldment is the path to wisdom and the destined way of human life; all other paths are nugatory and fraught with obstruction, this only lies free and open to the mind. We live sanely or insanely, wisely or unwisely; there is no choice but wisdom, there is no choice but the Spirit; and a true ideal, a right direction, a sincerity of purpose are essential to that equipoise which is an honor to men and the token of their divine descent.

WHERE DWELLS THE SOUL SERENE

The human mind is no constant and fixed quantity, but a variable, the resultant of lines of thought, and a right mental economy permits no disorganizing process of thought but such only as are positive, upbuilding and beneficent. Sense perversion leads to mental disintegration. The senses are the anomalous highways that lead forward or backward in obedience to the will, and an adequate insight into their nature and functions is the first step toward a freedom which is more than nominal. It is a precept of spiritual prudence that the carnal mind leads to dissolution, that the spiritual mind ever brings peace. Starve the higher nature, and the lower makes its insidious demands in the vain hope of stilling the inner longing and unrest.

We live every man at the center of a hollow sphere wherein our thoughts are echoed back to us,—antagonism for antagonism, indifference for indifference, good-will for good-will; and so is made and unmade what we term environment, which is the projection of the mind,—for man orders his own environment and gives to his world its apparent hue—daubs it black or paints it in rose color. Well for us when we learn to apply our correction to the inner condition rather than the outer circumstance. Over the inner world we have control; but open the door to one annoyance and a score rush in. There is a category of grating noises, of unsavory smells, of seeming annoyances; and to recognize one is to accept the whole family—and the most distant connections are summoned to take up their abode with us.

The mind that has not found its center is liable

to all distraction; but the wise perceive that the Soul is the substance, and things are naught in themselves. We are asleep to that which most concerns us and awake to all that distracts; we hear the huckster in the street and are deaf to the intoning organ within the temple. Among the carvings on the shrines of the Shoguns is one representing three monkeys, one covering his eyes, another his ears and a third his mouth; and they point a maxim of Shinto ethics. Close the ears and eyes to what is not good to hear and see; we shall choose food for the mind no less than for the stomach; we shall reject unwholesome sights and sounds, and *thoughts*, as we would unsavory dishes.

The majestic base upon which are erected the loftiest characters is that spiritual poise which arises from the inner controlling conviction that love is the finest fruit of life as well as its governing principle; that it is the essence of all nobleness, all majesty, all sublimity whatsoever; that it is the only possible point from which to project real character and aims, the only lasting foundation upon which to build a true civilization and a true society. Where this conviction becomes supreme it points the goal of human attainment in the evolution from egotism to altruism, and marks the ground where the human shall become merged in the Divine. It leads to that personal abnegation from whence springs the supreme assertion of the individual, wherein so tranquil, so divinely assured is the man that he rests invulnerable to all influences that savor not of love. In that perfect balance of the love and the understanding is preserved the integrity to truth in the face of all

error; loyalty to all that is generous and magnanimous in spite of what is paltry and ignoble, for love is the one defense against all that aims at man's integrity to himself. It is never off its guard, it is never betrayed to self-interest, it never descends to retaliation; and this is its concern—that it shall deal in equity and kindness with all men irrespective of the conduct of others, deeming it sufficient to be true to itself. Whatsoever it receives, counterfeit, copper, or silver,—it pays always in gold.

Self-knowledge, then, is the secret of poise,—self-knowledge and that perception of divine order that insures faith in the guidance of the Spirit. Behold now the poised mind,—the man stands like Ajax and shall defy the lightning. The goods of the world come and go and are to him as a summer shower; he does not pine nor is he elated; he is not shamed by the nobly spreading tree that welcomes its leaves to see them fall in due season without repining—resting assured in the advent of a new spring. Thus with senses stilled and mind unlifted he stands already on the threshold and feels the pulsation of the Great Heart within him,—his presence a benediction.

IX. ETHICAL RELATIONS

THE SCIENCE of living is the knowledge of relationship, of man to God, and this is religion and metaphysics; of man to man, and this is ethics. And one is spiritual no less than the other; for man to man, what is that but spirit to spirit? There is, then, a transcendental side of ethics—an unwritten law, above and beyond the code, that acts over our heads: a spirit that militates for or against our act though that be in accord with the accepted letter of moral science. Unless we act with the knowledge and agreement of this, our ethical relations are not eminently practical but still speculative; for whatsoever is done to the letter alone is as often defeated by the spirit of our act.

Since weak minds are receptive to whatever negative suggestions they may receive, what if the published account of crime, while upholding the letter, prove to be a sin against the spirit of ethics? What if nostrum advertisements were designed to beget in the foolish mind the very symptoms for which they announce a cure? What if the slaughter-house were a crime against ethics,—and the arsenal and the powder factory; and peace commissions, and vegetarian tendencies and the protection of birds, all in the nature of an awakening and a broader perception of ethics?

There is a science of everydayness and commonplaceness as well as of great ends; and it is in little

things that any disparity between the letter and the spirit of our ethics is the sooner revealed. Hospitality must be complete or it misses the mark; hospitality of ideas and of good-will,—no less than of wines and viands. If our hostess be glum her culinary efforts are wasted. Whatever is done at the expense of harmonious relationship defeats its own ends and is poor economy. Household economics may not stop short at the consideration of *things*, but must include mental states, and provide against mental wear and tear. Good fare will never offset a lack of amiability and bonhomie. It is not enough to provide shelter and food; we owe it as well to bring peace and cheerfulness. Better a little dust and quietness than overmuch housecleaning and a loss of poise; better a crust and sweetness of mind; yes, better far a dinner of herbs where love is.

Our relations with men are psychic and occult. It is as useless to say one thing and mean another as it is foolish to outwardly smile while we inwardly frown. The outward bearing is often hypocritical; not so with the psychic relation, which is always candid. When we talk behind the back we communicate more than we mean to. If we do not favor a man he will find it out despite any protestations to the contrary. The mental attitude prevails and is swifter and surer than speech. Children and dogs read our attitude before we have spoken. A dog is never deceived into thinking we are friendly to him. Where men are wise enough to observe this attitude and to let the outer and the inner correspond, they are repaid by truer relations with one another. But

this does not imply the expression of whatever we may feel; it means the cultivation of a feeling that is worthy of expression. We are not to cover our antagonisms, but to get rid of them. Antagonisms are the bane of society; they ramify like hidden mines under our homes. It makes little difference that they are not expressed,—they are always felt.

To be happy is no less a duty to be performed than an ideal to be obtained. If our philosophy makes us pessimists, if our religion produces melancholy, we had better have done with them both, for true religion and real philosophy produce no such bitter fruit. The virtue lies not so much in enduring, but in enduring cheerfully; not so much in work done or obstacles overcome, but rather in the having done this while retaining still the blessings of cheerfulness and equanimity. The presence of a cheerful man is as much a blessing as is the sunshine. Our self-poise is not yet so stable but what we are easily disconcerted by angry looks and snappish behavior; and the provocation is strong to stumble over other people's failings,—to be ruffled because of another's brusqueness, irritated by another's irritability. The burden of our indebtedness to the letter of civilization is great, but to the spirit thereof it is very little. What right have we to present a sour face to the world? Human law can make no provision as to what we shall *think* of people; but divine law is very searching. The money obligation is but a tithe of the real indebtedness which is paid not by the sweat of the brow but by the goodness of the heart and the serenity of the mind. Touch life with the wand of cheerfulness

and the dull and commonplace become instinct with vitality and interest. There is no limit to the power of cheerfulness in reconstructing and smoothing the path of every-day life.

From the home as a center emanate those influences—be they small or great—that make for civilization; and the ethics of family life, the knowledge of harmonious relationship, is fundamental in social science. Charity begins at home; charity of speech, charity of manner,—above all, charity of thought. And these all take rank before charity of dollars. Where these sweet influences arise from the hearth and pervade the home, there is a point of contact of earth and heaven; and where they are wanting, there are the confines of hell.

At the root of the ethics of the home lie the rights of the unborn, and here is the beginning of charity: charity to the individual, to society, and to the race; charity to the present and to the future,—yes, great charity to posterity, and to the page of history. The right to be well-born and royally welcomed, to be the children of loving union and some degree of spiritual affinity, to be the children of high purpose, of balance, and sanity, and poise—this is the demand of the coming race upon a sincere charity the world over.

To us comes a little child, arising from the sanctity of the heart: from the Invisible wafted to the world of form,—a soul wrapped in the body of a child. We the magicians have summoned the Spirit of Life, and it is here. Where was emptiness, there is a something concrete—yet inscrutable. We have assumed the prerogative of creator; we have

commanded the forces of nature, and infinite time and infinite space, the laws of the universe—Titan and Cyclops—obey and do seem to wait upon us. The fiat has gone forth that a soul should become incarnate, and the heavens have opened and down through the royal highway it has come. A child has come among us: a sprite, an elf, a bit of sunshine,—and we call this birth. There it lies fresh from the mother world, summoned from the presence of the Supreme. Spirit of the Sublime, whence have you come and whither do you go; and who are we who thus enjoin and then call you child? Not alone to our own ends do we marry and are given in marriage. We are the factotums of a mighty purpose which surges into and through us, carrying us off our feet,—impelling us irresistibly: actors in the sacred drama of life,—going through the parts assigned but knowing not the purpose of it all. To us it is left to give an impress to the mind; of us is demanded the inheritance of sanity and love that is to be a factor in society, in history, in the sum of human happiness. But the Soul acknowledges a higher motherhood and fatherhood than ours,—tarries with us and then passes on its stately way.

Because we love wife or child let us not hold them so close they are stifled. A complete love is without fear, and the perfect love for the creature implies a corresponding love for the Creator. Whenever we show fearfulness we betray a lack of trust; and to that extent is our love imperfect—to that degree is it less than love. We may never love the creature more than the Creator; we may never reckon without God, try how we will. Whenever it is attempted,

parental love degenerates into anxiety,—and a consuming fear defeats the ends of love.

Our child is first God's child; we are but the foster-parents. Permit Him, then, to participate in the guidance of His child. Why should we assume the entire responsibility who are manifestly unfit? If we look to it that our example be worthy, God will undertake that the child shall profit by it. There are families in which the children seem mere faded negatives of the grown folks, of such undue vigilance are they the victims. The individuality of the young people is suppressed; what wonder the boys kick over the traces, and the girls are not happy at home. "Let me alone," is the cry of many a suppressed spirit chafing under this foolish vigilance. When we learn the efficacy of suggestion we need not depend on the rod of coercion; when we perceive the power of example we shall deliver no homilies on what not to do. Children are reflectors for parental thought, and elder discords sink deep in little minds; let us be chary of our reproofs, then, for the spirit of ethics is very exacting.

Nowhere is tact more necessary nor its exercise more difficult than in the family and among intimates. Acquaintanceship usually provokes us to what tact we have at our command; friendship not infrequently would dispense with it; kinship usually ignores it. Tact is not dissimulation but adroitness; a judicious consideration of personal peculiarities whereby the individual may be skilfully led out and away from these,—where bluntness would serve to intensify them. Where maladroitness reproves and preaches, tact diverts and suggests, and carries the

day. As the recognition of individual needs, tact becomes the instrument of education, for we are not to pour the mind of childhood into set forms as we would empty lead into bullet molds, but to discover the true bent and to divert and encourage it in that direction. When the spirit of the age frowns down the individual, genius hides. We may infer such a spirit to have been lacking in a Golden or an Augustan Age, and that society respected the desire for original effort, as now it applauds successful results but discourages the apprenticeship.

And yet do we owe a debt to the seemingly tactless. There are men whose mission lies in their very idiosyncrasies; they put their friends to the test as to whether their regard be sterling, by subjecting them continually to the ordeal of a trying egotism. They are forever laying little traps for us, and if our philosophy is not real we are constantly getting entangled and receiving little wounds and scratches to our feelings,—that is, our egotism. They provoke us to being broad to compensate for their narrowness; to being liberal to offset their intolerance. Have we a point of pride, it is become in their hands a whip with which to lash us. Are we oversensitive, they ride rough shod over us until we are forced to overcome it. Are we indifferent or lackadaisical, have we a peculiarity,—they stumble over it until the obstruction is removed. They are emery to our roughness and our rustiness; under their merciless polishing we begin to shine. These men are to us at first like chestnut burrs,—we never touch them without pricking the fingers. But no sincere person ever persisted in his intercourse with

such a one without coming at length to acknowledge the benefit derived in patience and tolerance, and feeling grateful to his erstwhile tormentor.

It is the blessing of society that it gives us the necessary polishing and removes the unseemly and jagged edges and protuberances. It is the bane of too much society that it finally polishes its members all down to the same measure until they have no more apparent individuality than so many bullets, or the sands on the shore. The moral is: Do not expose yourself too constantly to the destructive machine. Relinquish your rough edges but withdraw before your very identity has been smoothed away.

It never pays to be frivolous; we must play games in earnest, laugh in earnest, make merry in earnest. We do well that alone which we do with the whole heart. To act with any lesser purpose involves a certain dissipation. It is not the doing of a thing nor the doing of nothing that counts, so much as it is the way in which it is done. To be able at times to do nothing, and to do it in earnest, implies a certain high state of concentration and fixity of purpose. The best workmen have learned the value of absolute repose.

Action! and forever action! Shall we be surfeited with action while we perish for want of thought? Acts engender consequences which stream from them like the tails of comets. Read the account of a day's crimes and misdoings and it would seem that men were best off asleep. How much is learned that must be unlearned; how much builded that must come down,—done that must be undone! Some

would have it that if we are not continually in action we are wasting time; but let them be grateful to the hours they spend in sleep, for then at least they are not sowing the wind,—for where is the man who can yet preserve his integrity to God and to the Soul throughout one entire day? What are troubles and vicissitudes but the consequences of former indiscretions; and the present the outcome of the past, and today the sum of all days which have been. What can any man receive that he does not deserve? Shall we accuse the divine order,—who are not yet able to perceive the spirit of ethics? Let us lay aside this child's play of three-score years and ten, and deal with *life*. Until the continuity of life has become to us axiomatic we are still within the grave. Inaction, then, were better than false action. Unless we can do something to the purpose let us sit and fold the hands, and not mar the day. We must finally admit that our activity, like force itself, is efficient in proportion as it is subtle and refined. The less the smoke the hotter the blaze. The noise and bustle of inefficient action is as the smoke of a poor fire. Silence is the womb of great action; and it is in the silence that we live deeply, think truly, act divinely. Hence be not misled by the semblance of action nor by the appearance of inaction; but consider the strength that lies in calmness, the might of self-control, the vast psychic forces which operate in silence.

X. WEALTH

THERE are two standards of value, the one real and the other fictitious, one permanent and the other shifting. It is a propensity of the human mind to forego the idea and deal with the symbol, and as money is the symbol of wealth, to invest the material world, organic and inorganic, with a material value, and to write dollars and cents over the face of God's fair earth; and so it comes that society is well nigh submerged in the stream of opulence that flows from the human mind, that symbolic stream which quenches not the inner thirst, that affords "not any drop to drink."

There is perhaps no subject which labors under a more general misapprehension than that of wealth. While economists have dimly predicated an inward as well as an outward wealth, they have preferred to treat it directly as that which has an exchange value and to class it as a species of utility, but of a base order, having reference only to the material welfare of man. And herein lies the fallacy of the worldly concept of life, that it would deal with material issues as separate from spiritual, whereas in fact the material is but the reflex of the spiritual, and can no more be rightly considered as a separate entity than a corpse may be regarded as a man; and though political economy may admit that man *has* a soul, it nevertheless does not recognize it as an asset.

It is a shallow sophism that money will buy

everything; it will buy everything but happiness, everything but peace, everything but truth, wisdom, love. It will buy servile allegiance but not respect; it will buy a book but not the ability to read it; it will buy a coronet but not nobility of character. In short, it will buy the symbols but not the substance of things.

To inherit money may or may not prove beneficial; but to inherit the conviction that money constitutes wealth is always a calamity. There is this difference, moreover, between earning money and acquiring it, that the one contributes to character and the other requires character to withstand it. Two payments are made for all honest work; the first is in money and is counted, the second is in patience, in dexterity, in tact, experience and courage, and is not counted.

An adequate cultivation of the mind renders much money superfluous; a real contentment needs but few dollars. We have forsaken Virgil and Horace for the applied sciences, but the classics would, none the less, augment the wealth of imagery and of thought. Culture forever protests that money is not wealth, but its symbol, merely; that "money is not required to buy one necessary of the soul"; and the spiritual mind exhorts us to seek first the kingdom of God—to work for that in life that shall endure. It is not to the Ricardos nor the Adam Smiths, it is not to political but rather to spiritual economy that we shall look for a right understanding of wealth.

For the world's view of wealth readily follows its dogma of success. Money is today largely the measure of success—a business that is profitable; a profession that is lucrative. But the ample perspective

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of history reveals success to lie only in the character of a work and thus is assigned a truer value to a work of Phidias or an ode of Pindar than to contemporary art or life. Inventors have lived in garrets; there are monuments of literature which brought but paltry sums to their authors; prophets have been stoned. Was the inventor then less rich in ideas; was the author less wealthy in diction; had the prophet any the less an ownership in truth? It is but a poor standard of success that is measured by gold and silver; a noble bearing, a lofty brow, a kindly smile, a self-control, a healthy body, a clear eye bespeak a success that is more real. The only victory worth making is the victory over one's self; the only real success lies in the development of character and insight; the only thing worth seeking is the Soul; the only thing worth possessing is the truth; the only thing worth living for is love. And this is the greatest success—to have ennobled your environment, to have done good, to have given happiness, to be happy; for virtue alone wears a serene smile, and wisdom only is truly happy.

It shall become apparent to every thoughtful mind that despite the fetishism of the dollar, it is not money but love that rules the world. Prince Sidartha renounced a throne, and in the garb of a mendicant went forth to enlighten men and to teach the supreme doctrine of love and of renunciation. Jesus, in the name of Love, healed the sick, raised the dead, gave sight to the blind, and his life was a giving and a doing for others; a torrent of beneficence and kindly deeds. Yet, He who is called the Light of the World was a penniless wanderer in Palestine. Think you

the world of Annas and Caiaphas esteemed the life of this man a successful one? Do we esteem any one successful today who has not a house over his head, be his preaching never so eloquent? But these lives are momentous facts that somehow subvert all our standards of success. And though in the growth of civilization the examples are no longer applicable to present needs, the principles and ideas are none the less so,—a fact to which the world offers tacit recognition, for with all its getting and all its self-seeking it is still led by inspired mendicants, whose sole possession is wisdom. What of the Pharaohs, the Cæsars, the kings—is their memory grateful to mankind? What of the great names of science—have their discoveries on the whole contributed to make life happier or nobler? How is it that the names of simple men outweigh the influence of empires and of dynasties?

It fatigues to be constantly reminded of the so-called wealth of men—that man should so universally be judged according to the symbol. Wealth is capacity, not money; the capacity to love, the capacity to appreciate the beautiful, the capacity—above all—to hear and apprehend the monitions of the Spirit. He who possesses the symbol merely, not knowing the thing symbolized, is often the poorest of men. It is said the inventor is always poor; so he may be in money, but so is Crœsus poor in invention. Poverty is relative. He who is rich in equipages is often poor in health—in sinew and vigor to climb the mountains. Must we be taught that there is no poverty to the Soul? We have wealth to the extent that we apprehend the principles of being. It is no

appraisal of a man's wealth, indeed, to say he has certain stocks and bonds, for every man owns heaven and hell.

Wealth, then, is capacity: capacity for wisdom; capacity for doing good; capacity for entering into the lives of others. Egotism is a kind of pauperism; to see everything always from a personal standpoint is to be incarcerated within the four walls of a self-made prison and to exclude a wealth of human love and sympathy. Incapacity to grasp the true meaning of life; incapacity for expressing the good that is in us; incapacity for recognizing the good that is in others—such is poverty. To be poor in love, to be poor in thought, is to be poor indeed. What avails a vast estate if we live in a crack; to what end a private observatory if we dwell in the cellar of our being; of what use broad acres to a narrow mind?

The only real wealth lies within, and no outer semblance shall gainsay an inner poverty. The richer the inner life the greater the outer simplicity. There are men who never find themselves until they lose their money; there are beauties that never become apparent until the purse is empty. When we have found the Soul, what can be added to or taken from us? We shall cherish the Soul in the silence and leave the trappings of the world—the tinsel and gewgaws. It is expedient to have our possessions within, compact and available, that we may be in good marching order and shall not be hindered on the journey. Better internal forces than external incumbrances.

Ah! To live free from perturbation, tranquil! serene! How do we call ourselves men—who are

driven by care, we who are slaves to a calling to the end that the vanity may be pampered, the stomach appeased. Fear, toiling to lay up against a "rainy day," is meanwhile forging chains. But to the serene mind there are no rainy days. Real necessity requires only the work of men and not the toil of slaves. Surely there is a high price paid for luxury; simplicity would lift a burden from the shoulders. Reflect, that, after all, the quintessence of things may never be bought. We can only buy according to our capacity; we read in the book only the measure of our own enlightenment; we see in the work of art only the degree to which we are receptive to the beautiful, and conversant with the principles of art. Nor can there be obtained the full significance of that to which somewhat is not contributed—the work of mind or hands: the artist, the artificer, the craftsman retains always an interest in what is bought of him. The gardener laying out a flower bed will abstract a share of its meaning and its beauty. What are these things sought after? Are they worth the best part of human life? Is the diamond more beautiful than the rain-drop on the barberry leaf; or ruby, than the cardinal flower as it gleams solitary from amidst the low alders; is there woven fabric more delicate than the spider's web? Is there aught more precious to a thoughtful man than leisure: leisure to reflect, to meditate, to worship? What a commentary upon society that men have not time to observe nature—nor time to reflect upon what they are, nor why they may be here!

Values are not always apparent, and a hasty judgment would often overlook that which is best.

There are delicate lovely blossoms so fragile they may not be plucked from the grassy meadow in which they grow; so is it with our fairest visions, expressed in words they can never be, for their subtle and ethereal quality escapes us. The sand-dunes and the desert have been made to burst in bloom, and where once was a dreary waste, the Gold of Ophir now twines about the branches of the pepper trees, the heliotrope and the lemon verbenas stand high in air, the Cherokee runs riot and the Marechal Niel hangs its heavy head. And this much will love do for the barren life: no desert but shall be bright with flowers; no Sierra but shall have its snow-plant. There are kind hearts under rough coats; there is a vision of truth in lowly minds. All that glitters is not gold, and there is a gold that does not glitter.

We hear of men today in India who can neither read nor write and are yet profoundly versed in the science of being; men who have never owned a single piece of gold, but are rich in the Soul's realization of freedom, and who rejoice in the wealth and power of self-control and self-union. There are men who wander from village to village along the dusty Indian roads, calling practically nothing their own, in whose eyes shines the light of peace, on whose brows is the stamp of wisdom. Men of remote and inadequate ways of life these, as judged by western standards; yet must we bow to the superiority which lies in a serene consciousness, though housed in a barren exterior, for a true sagacity perfects always the inner life and dwells within the sanctuary. And what shall we say, we of rich externals, but no serenity, no self-trust?

WEALTH

Every man comes into the world with a title to all that is; it remains for him to prove it through capacity. There is a prior title to this lake, this forest, these mountains, than any that is on record. All recorded titles may prove defective, for like people's names they seldom fit their owners. Such an one has a deed to the shore of a lake, but its beauty eludes him and he foolishly cherishes the possession of so much muck and mire, and is weighed down with his cubic yards of earth. Another is ravished with the beauty of this same fair lake; it is to him a consolation and an inspiration, and he springs aloft in the joy of his spiritual possessions. Have done with this cry of poverty, and reflect that for you have been painted and chiseled the masterpieces, for you has been garnered all wisdom, for you races have lived and wrought; that in the dim past poets wrote for you—looked over the heads of their unheeding fellows, and said, "I salute you, you who in ages to come shall commune with me—for you I write." Ponder this, and consider how august a personage you are and never more belittle yourself or live other than nobly. And how marvelous the working of the divine laws that a little book should live through the ages—to come in at your window and open before you its message at the appointed time, that seers should prophesy and philosophers meditate and historians write for you—you whose inheritance of beauty is as wide as the cosmos, and as deep; whose estate of wisdom is as great as your own soul; whose property in love is as large as your own heart.

There is a storehouse of undreamed-of wealth to which every soul may have access; knock, and the

door shall be opened to you. Is not truth an adequate legacy? Is not the kingdom of God a sufficient inheritance? For what bauble shall we renounce them and preserve a semblance of reason? It is not currency reform—neither a gold standard nor the free coinage of silver; it is neither protection nor free trade that shall bring the "good times" we so eagerly await. But it is spiritual-mindedness, right living and right thinking; it is love in the world—more cooperation and less competition. The perfection of the credit system is one indication of the degree of civilization, but trust in god is a greater. There is a spiritual as well as a business acumen. We soon pass judgment on the banker who fails to note the proper value of securities, or neglects the world of affairs; but here are we all foolish bankers who pay no heed to spiritual values, which alone are enduring.

In this plea for a right understanding of what constitutes wealth, I would not be thought foolishly to disparage the good offices of money. Manifold are its beneficent uses. But whenever that which is ordained a means is falsely elevated to the dignity of an end, a goal in life, the perversion worketh woe. Money as a means is an agent of love; as an end it is a cause of sorrow, a breeder of strife, and only when returned to its proper place does it fulfil its beneficent function. Not until the gold of the Nieblung is restored to the Rhine does peace prevail. Let us acquire money, and let us spend it if in so doing we may quicken the generous impulse and expand the heart, and not come to shut our eyes to the wealth that lies within. A wise man regulates his expenditure

by what is fitting, and not by what he can "afford." No man can afford to spend upon himself more than is needful; none can afford luxuries where others lack necessities. He is the richer who is content with less, not he who, having much, needs more. But prudence lies not in spending little, but in spending wisely, and it is a poor economy that saves money and lets go generosity. Would that we knew more of the beauty of simplicity and of the value of a stern and frugal way of life, for high living ever discourages high thinking, and when most lavish to the body we are penurious to the Soul.

XI. TRUE AIMS

THE WISE men of our youth recede before our maturing vision; the giants diminish in stature, and presently we are abreast of them and look over their heads. Our idols descend from their pedestals. With what assurance were we children taught fables to which there was no moral; and having discerned this we see how assumed was this assurance of our early teachers. How impermanent are our impressions. The greatest ship or tallest building, or the span of new bridge have our curiosity for a day and are no longer thought of. The travesty of justice—the infamous trial—horrify us for the moment but make no lasting impression. The battle-field and the holocaust are soon forgotten. We must needs have a ship a mile long, or a bridge to the moon to hold the attention; and such would soon be an old story. In what a fever do we live! We must have perpetual news, and yet no news is ever new. Photograph any street scene and all the persons in it appear to be moving at a dog trot. Yet no man ever ran away from himself. Every man runs because another runs—but no one stops to inquire whither. We are like men traversing the ice in a direction contrary to the movement of the floe; there is no change of latitude commensurate with the exertion. All things are afloat,—the world's afloat!

But there is that which remains forever firm, and

there should we stand related. There is a substance and it may be found, a purpose and it may be known; who has faith, perception, will—he shall find and to him it shall be known. Life is spiritual here and now and God is nearer than we know—"nearer than hands and feet." To be skeptical of the world is one thing, to be skeptical of life, quite another. The former may be the beginning of philosophy, the latter is misanthropy and nullity. Truth only is infallible; and men and events worthy only in as much as they reflect this. Therefore let thy allegiance be to truth alone. To honor God is to do reverence to the soul in men; but to fail in the recognition of the Divine Immanence is to be at best but a half-brother to them. We are beholden to the purpose which placed us here, which has nurtured us through immemorial time, preserving inviolate the intrepid Soul, that we should discover our identity and straightway declare allegiance to divine law; should aim to sing this event in the poetry and inspiration of our lives. Men enough there are to scoff and sneer at life, men enough to merely hope for a beneficent outcome—to predict a compensation for present conditions; but only now and then is there a man who can show that these are not ills. A little observation shows that society is infected with pessimism. The world is full of future idealists who are nevertheless present pessimists. What it needs always is men who believe in today, who see in the hour the guarantee of eternity; men of a resolute faith who shall consecrate their divine energies to the understanding rather than to the intellect. That man cannot live by bread alone

should be obvious to a dullard. No food but the bread of life shall satisfy the ultimate hunger. There is need, then, of those who can prevent the spread of a spiritual famine and carry relief to the many that lack spiritual nourishment. And these the world needs for its own sake,—not for truth's sake, for truth needs no assurances. It is a trite saying this, "for God's sake," and means nothing. Beneath the very preacher's nose they sit—these hungry souls with their famished look.

History has shown how abortive are all aims not projected from a universal standpoint—that is, with reference to the Soul; and every man's private experience must ultimately confirm this. In his heart of hearts the millionaire has come to feel an affinity with Midas. Fame can be nothing to man; it is much to his egotism. But the day comes when he perceives that this latter is something it were well to be rid of. Seek money to the end of happiness and the money is gained, but the happiness escapes. Ever is self-loathing the end of self-seeking.

But how shall we set limits to true achievement who are but mediums for the all-pervading Spirit—tongues that must ultimately speak for eternal truth? The mistake has been in assuming that men were separate and detached in their existence, instead of points of admission to a common source.

No man ever withdrew himself in bitterness from men but presently he was called upon to make atonement. We shall expiate every hour wasted in melancholy; repay with interest the time we gave to playing the cynic. Go the length of cynicism and it shall be required of you to go as far in the

opposite direction. The angle of reflection shall equal the angle of incidence. Love solitude we may, but woe to him who is guilty of inhumanity. Love nature more but love not men the less. He who perceives not God in his brother shall look in vain elsewhere. There is no drawing nearer to God through separating ourselves from men. The experiment is often tried and as often fails. But it is the attitude which counts—not the appearance. It were as well to dwell in a cave as to live among men and have no point in common. There are more hermits in cities than in the wilderness. Ours is not wisdom until it has become serene and tolerant. We shall be tolerant of their very foibles; have we not so lived, and shall they not presently view their folly as now we have been brought to view our own?

Never was there a serene moment but it bore the fruit of serenity; never a moment of courage but was productive of courage. One intrepid man may infuse the heroic spirit into a multitude. A few men with a genius for enterprise and affairs keep the ball rolling; plenty there are to push at their bidding. See, then, the worth of the individual. Little kings inherit thrones,—little men plot and scheme; but the command is thrust upon the great man,—on him the office waits. Creation awaits the approach of genius and is ever urging its advent. When the man comes there is always palette and chisel ready at hand. Our life proves to be a preparation for the event, public or private.

Opportunities for public heroism are few, and even so are cheapened and made theatric by their very publicity. But it is left to every man to be

heroic, if he will, in his private life; there is no bar to private heroism. And why should we have an audience for our acts; why make a spectacle of virtue? There is an inner sanction, a silent approval, which is heard beyond all plaudits; and this suffices to self-reliance. When the world is become our mentor we have no longer any rugged or Spartan virtue left. Men hesitate to open an account with God, forgetful that the Spirit writes down their every act, and strikes a balance on their faces.

To do well,—this alone concerns us; to do better than another is of no moment—is indeed a false aim. The achievement of another is never properly a standard. Rather let us trust ourselves and accept the Inner Light and the standard there revealed. Nor may I rightly aim to surpass another; but to reach my own mark and fulfil my own measure alone involves a worthy motive. With all due allowance for the competitive spirit it is at best a respectable selfishness. Shall we not aim high for love of truth and live nobly for the honor of that which makes us to live at all? What if men were as eager for divine approbation as for the praise of the world?

"Suppose," said Epictetus, "Cæsar were to adopt you, there would be no bearing your haughty looks; and will you not feel ennobled on knowing yourself to be the son of God." Rest assured if you have cast in your lot for truth, that truth will not forsake you. Whoever works for good is sustained by good; whoever lives a normal life receives the cooperation of law. The service is reciprocal; to serve wisdom is never a thankless task.

TRUE AIMS

In the event of our lost opportunities being marshaled before us we would doubtless be astounded and chagrined at the disclosure,—so numerous are they, so simple their character. We passed through a field of flowers and saw them not. We would be astonished at what is not there no less than by what appears. The futile ambition, the wrong investment, the political failure,—for these we may look in vain; but our Nemesis is very real—very precise. Children would pass before us—children whose smiles we did not see; men who asked nothing and to whom we should have given; those in need of kind words and for whom we had none. The child that hungered for the affection we withheld would be there, and the gentle mother whose only reproof was patience and forbearance. Not what we failed to get but what we failed to give,—such are lost opportunities; new hopes to which we offered no encouragement; feeble longings which our indifference stifled; meetings and partings to which we brought no smile, no faith, no courage.

O to scatter blessings broadcast, to give without wish for return, to do good for the joy of it, to toss your good-will and heartiness right and left among men; to bring a smile to wan faces, hope into dull eyes, sunshine into dark corners, and so touch men's lives that they shall feel the passing of some benign influence, the presence of something divine,—here are aims! O the joy of a big heart and a kindly nature; the power to draw the best from men,—to infuse into them a new life and courage; to catch them up out of the life of eating and drinking and cast a ray of the Soul into their befuddled minds; to kindle a

little flame of unselfish love in cold hearts, a little enthusiasm in cold intellects; to take the miser out of his den and show him the riches of the heart; to take the rich man from his playthings and reveal to him the beauty and purpose of life! Whatever cramps the mind or contracts the heart, whatever apparent success in one direction that makes intolerance of other directions, may be reckoned a false aim. All success must be weighed in this balance. We must have something real to show for the having lived. To have grown wise and kind is the real success. We should be holy men in the sense of whole men,—whole-souled, whole-hearted. Men will look to us in their time of trouble for courage, wisdom, faith,—and if we have but money to offer we shall appear foolish indeed.

Men, aye, races of men, have toiled out their lives and disappeared without accomplishing as much as have some men of genius in a single day. Why talk of time? Where is there a man who has lived a good hour of life; or one who is now living, and not still *preparing* to live? Three-score years and ten of eating, drinking and sleeping is a puff of smoke. But one hour of faith, one hour of divine life inaugurates an era. To live divinely is not to ignore the commonplace but to ennoble it. Did we accord to the simple acts of life that worth and dignity which is their due we would live deeper and truer, and advance in harmony with the eternal purport of things. Who knows what it is to live; who knows the joy of real life,—life which is prayer, life which is worship. Are we to beg and cringe and hang on the outer edge of life,—we who should walk grandly? Is it for man

to tremble and quake—man who in his spiritual capacity becomes the interpreter of God's message,—the focus of Divine Light?

In the divine economy is no experiment, no waste—no loss. But we are under the necessity of becoming wise. Therefore *think*—and think again, for you shall deliver yourself through understanding. Be earnest for truth, and whichever way you turn, before you stretches a road that leads to God. Whatever the present outlook, we shall yet attain a broader; whatever the present insight, we shall yet possess a deeper. There is no stumbling-block but may prove a stepping-stone; no prison bars but shall fade away. To our self-complacency comes no uplifting thought, no sense of the Immanent Presence; but out of unrest comes ultimately a divine and healing consciousness. When the props fall away we re-recover our strength. After the storm comes a glowing sense of peace; from the ashes of the old springs the new—phenix-like.

The Spirit descends upon all; oftenest to the pure in mind,—the child-eyed. If not in ecstatic vision, then in uplifting thought, in generous impulse. Wherever there are helping hands, wherever there are kindly thoughts, where for one divine moment unselfishness speaks her benediction—there is the Spirit and there is the presence of the Lord. It may be in palaces—but it is oftenest in homes. Is it nothing to withhold the carping words, nothing to forbear from judging; is it nothing to make a day brighter, to have made golden one passing hour? A merry heart will ever remain the best medicine, and sweet thoughts are angels, and gentle smiles a benediction.

WHERE DWELLS THE SOUL SERENE

More kingly it is to have given a bone to a friendless dog than much that passes for kingliness; and to let the tide of your good-will flow to so insignificant a thing as yon hop-toad has a bearing on your life. When we live near to God, ever shall the Spirit catch us up into the heaven of peace and good-will.

XII. HIGHER LAWS

IN A higher classification, mankind may be divided—irrespective of its various minor attributes—into two grand subdivisions of thinkers and non-thinkers: the former susceptible of further distinctions, both generic and specific, becoming more and more specialized. It is the unthinking—the poor in thought—who constitute the real masses, the clay that is molded by the minds of thinkers. So arduous is it to think for ourselves, so convenient to accept other men's thoughts, that we are for a period constrained to waive the high prerogative of creative and original thinking and to dwell within that lesser province of intellection—the sphere of imitative and mechanical thought; and thus are we kept circling well within the horizon of some book. But when we would boldly sail to the circumference of our circle, there to balance on the outermost edge of the universe, where sky and water meet, the horizon has somehow slipped before us and we are at the center of a new circle, this time of our own projecting.

He that owes no allegiance save to the Eternal, and believes first in himself and his divine right and equality, walks thenceforth among manikins. But these men are not elect, they are self-evolved; and constantly do we hear of traitors in the ranks of the non-thinkers who have crossed to the other side never to return, detaching themselves as do icebergs from

the mass of a glacier, thenceforth to float away, solitary.

During the period of adaptation to its new environment, the child must gradually become familiar with perspective and must acquire the faculties of assigning objects to their respective planes, of discriminating between two and three dimensions, and of distinguishing solids and fluids. The development, in some degree, of these faculties through experience would appear to be the necessary preparation for voluntary action. To this end it is probable that the sense of sight contributes as much to delude as to enlighten; and it is by hard knocks that something is learned of the properties and dimensions of solids and their relations to one another in space. So every man begins life an explorer; and, from reconnoitering first a crib and then a nursery, he goes to investigating broader and broader fields.

Thus do we mature infants grope in the mysterious world of unknown quantities and indefinite dimensions, and are bumped and bruised through inability to judge of distances and broken on the projecting corners of divine and immutable laws; relegating to an indefinite futurity that which is contemporaneous with us, mistaking the third dimension for a fourth, and stumbling over the fourth where we saw only three. And in this manner are we brought to perceive the real nature of our environment, that we may conclude our researches within the realm of subjectivity—nor again forsake the oasis of truth in pursuit of a mirage of the desert.

To have attained an outlook whence we are enabled in some measure to view both cause and effect, the

one commensurate with and proceeding logically from the other—and this law of sequence inherent in the nature of all; to perceive action as having its inception in thought and issuing thence, objective proceeding from the subjective and causation the sole prerogative of spirit and not of matter, of the mind and not the body, of the potter and not the clay—this perception in itself constitutes the passing over of the mind from the irrelevant and nondescript dreamland of chance to the consciousness of fixed and permanent spiritual quantities. It is the recognition of the all-inclusiveness of the province of design, of intent and purpose; wherein no more to be pursued by causeless results—the headless horsemen who lie in wait for the unwary; where no longer shall we throw the dice nor play at roulette.

This same outlook reveals the interrelation of theory and practice. To be contemptuous of theory denotes a lack of *savoir-faire*—an intellectual brusqueness; for so necessarily restricted is the finite comprehension of natural order, and yet so ingenious is the human mind, that working theory has become a part of the groundwork of science: and the most eminently practical men are such in virtue of their recognition of its nature and function. In short, theory has been made to supplement human limitations in the cognizance of law, and affords a present working basis; and practice may be largely defined as theory in application. The affinities of atoms—their very existence—and the precise nature of various forms of energy are still theoretical to our partial understanding, but serve, nevertheless, as the

basis upon which is erected a superstructure of chemical, electrical, and commercial interests; and the world owes much to those practical men whose faith in the theory has made this possible. Were it not for the evolution of theory we would doubtless still wear necklaces of teeth, and rings in the nose, and go armed with clubs and javelins; the savage devoid of theory remains a savage. What were the reason without the imagination? A dull tool, indeed, which would be forever chipping stone but make never a Corinthian column. The province of theory extends as well to political and governmental science. Monarchism is a theory that has largely failed—democracy a theory that is being tried.

Seldom is the message of the eye or ear wholly trustworthy; and to obey it implicitly is to follow a will-o'-the-wisp over the quagmires of illusion. As we float upon the limpid waters of the lake, sky-line and water-line do sometimes vanish, distant sails appear unsupported in the fluid air, and sticks lying on the sandy bottom seem writhing serpents seen through the gentle surface undulations of this so transparent yet delusive medium. Dip an oar beneath the surface and the straight-grained ash or hickory appears distorted and inadequate. Given the angle of refraction, the reason diligently corrects the optical illusion and in time makes unconscious allowance for such error. And so the indices of refraction are obtained for various media, and science stands ever ready to apply the tables of correction to the results of the errant senses.

But it is no less certain that whenever we dip an oar in the sea of sensuous perception it is apparently

deflected from the normal; and it becomes imperative that we so augment our tables of refraction as to embrace all opinions, concepts, and traditional wrappers and coverings whatsoever, and make specific allowance and correction for all impressions that reach us from the outer world. It is here that we are brought to recognize the function of higher law; for, while there are properly speaking none but divine laws, yet are we so encompassed with hypotheses that for lack of the recognition of something better are constituted laws, and so deemed axiomatic, that it becomes expedient to make the distinction. But the knowledge of the night continually vanishes with the dawn, and the tongues that spoke the loudest are silenced. "Skim milk" everywhere "masquerades as cream"; on every hand arise pretenders to the throne of reason; and semblance and delusion, and all the minions of the seeming, persistently throng the portals of the mind, so that again and again are men constrained to ask, "What is real?" Yet in that reality do we find our life and being; and these divine laws are the method of its working and impel us ever upward.

We think to "break the law," and at will to set aside divine order, or to divert the stream of good for one brief moment that it may overflow in our direction and leave others high and dry—only to find the bottom has fallen out of our little tub and it will no longer hold a drop. To follow this law of good is to receive a passport in whatever direction we would travel; and at every port we land we have but to show our papers. But who goes contrary to it and would outdo another opposes himself, not to

one man alone but to the power of universal good. The divine laws become the sponsors of every good man; but the very dust conspires to trip a rogue, and every sparrow mocks him.

The world—what is it, then? One lives in a sphere of sensation and another in a sphere of ideas; there are dream-worlds and thought-worlds, worlds tumultuous and worlds serene; spheres concentric, it may be, and these numbered by quintillions. Day after day we bid farewell to this world and awaken to a new one somewhat different; once in a lifetime to have all the old landmarks swept away and to find we are strangers in the land. A man of the world! Man of what world—world of fashion or world of letters; world of society or world of solitude? Close scrutiny reveals for every mind an inner and an outer world—the former the object, the latter its image; and when the world within is comely, then indeed is its reflection fair. We are traveling, after all, the beaten tracks of our minds, and seldom get beyond them. Now and again some determined explorer breaks away and starts for the pole of his being, returning with some fragments of evidence from that terra incognita—perchance returning never at all. Serene minds cast the reflection of their tranquil beauty before them, and who retains sweet thoughts moves evermore in a garden of roses.

We are as yet unable to define the world of dreams, nor is it evident that it is susceptible of definition in that we can set no bounds to the mind in sleep; but the mind when deemed awake tends to limit itself on every hand. Then when are we the more awake—

when defined or undefined? Ideas may come in sleep that are more lucid and succinct than are waking ideas, and altogether unmixed with anything extraneous, standing forth boldly as planets on the background of the night. We go a-dreaming with our eyes open, and all our days are somewhat drowsy and indifferent to real issues and a prey to conflicting thoughts. In waking hours the phantoms of death, of ills and imperfections, flit before us and are accounted real; but when in sleep we walk amidst peaceful groves and listen to the thrushes, we say, "I have had so fair a dream." It may transpire that in the perfect repose of profound sleep we have possessed the clearest recognition and so have drawn the curtains and discreetly retired within; that we are dwellers in that land of Nod and but visit this earth in dreams—and sleep, the ministering angel of the night that descends unto the mind and bids it return to the Fatherland.

There is a world less intangible than the foregoing, yet whose seeming anomalies forever repel and baffle casual investigation. I speak of the sphere of men's influence. Deference to sense evidence so obscures the perception of what is real that we are readily deceived into thinking men are actually removed from their sphere of usefulness; and where the influence is benign and far-reaching we are at a loss to be reconciled to its apparent and sudden withdrawal. Because the physical man is removed the eye discloses no man, but the reason should reveal an influence steadily growing. The years give prestige to the life no longer visible and hallow the sayings that were once unheeded. One who

has apparently left the world has nevertheless not withdrawn his influence, but is enlarging his sphere of good in virtue of the transition: for whereas in the flesh he was known to a handful only, he is now the good friend and counselor of thousands. In place of the good being buried, as the false adage would have it, it grows apace and becomes the beacon-light of ages. But the malign influence of vicious persons—the Neros and Caligulas—declines from the hour of their demise. We walk with a dozen men in the flesh and feel no affinity, but we are drawn by the human magnets of other times and delight to commune with the shades of the departed great. And they are nearer to us than our nearest neighbors, and understand us, it may be, better than brother or sister, and say to us that which none other can say.

As fountains rise and fall, intermingle and disappear, and from an idea assume their form, so there are affinities that hold together and give shape to human lives and their relations—and repulsions that break asunder. The apple falls to the earth and the earth to the apple, and we call it gravitation; but so am I gravitating to you and you to me, and all of us toward that which we do not know, but of which we are known. Men fall toward one another with irresistible force, and fall away from one another with equal violence—surging to and fro in friendships and animosities. A bird's-eye view of humanity would show it to be segregated into knots and clusters, each revolving about some individual as a center, and these in turn moving around some more distant mesmeric point—all subject to the motive power of suggestion.

My thought reaches you and impresses itself upon your mind; and if I am the stronger presently you are set in vibration and begin your unconscious revolution about me, carrying with you satellites having each its period. And thoughts are winged, and fly about until they find lodgment in some mind; and their coming and going are ceaseless vibrations of the ether. They are every one a suggestion fraught with future action. To every state of mind come like thoughts, and the positive mind is the recipient of messages of congratulation from far and near—a constant stream, resembling the fall of meteors into the sun. We harness the puissant forces of attraction and so sit in communication with gods and men, with all minds and all things. And to the knowing it is the seal of Omnipotence, but to the foolish an engine of destruction. We light the lamp of Aladdin and the earth rocks with the tread of genii, and the winds rise from the rustling of their wings. Now we attract a princess and a palace, and again are conjured up all the ills to which flesh seems heir—and they likewise are speedily forthcoming. Our fears come upon us, and the flock of crows for which we have looked do even now obscure the sun.

There is a state of mind through which some men pass—and it may well be called the winter of their discontent—wherein they leave no stone unturned in the effort to disparage their prerogatives and to erect barriers against the influx of good tidings. Under the ban of this delusion the mind is persistent in its denial of any good flowing to itself, and with faith in its own ability still defeats its good ends through avowing self-limitation and repelling those

benign influences that are tapping gently at every window.

Whoso would rise to the full height of his possibilities must possess an immeasurable faith, not alone in himself but in the cooperation of Divine Love. He must rest in the conviction that all shall work to the good of those who love God, that all desirable ends are to be obtained by whosoever abides in the truth. To a life so ordered the time is ever ripe to test the assertion of the Spirit. He that once despaired of happiness and equanimity—who in his ignorance gazed upon a Cimmerian world—shall yet behold the dawn of a brighter day and rejoice in the promise of a new life, therein to experience a liberty once undreamed of: a reality and depth of living until then unrecognized,—for the tyranny of the unreal shall be overthrown, and that which filled the horizon shall recede and become as a speck.

How dearly are we loved of the Spirit, that it should admonish us of our every fault—that from the cradle to the grave it should walk beside us. And never for an instant are we left wholly to our own devices, nor allowed to deviate a hair's breadth from the right direction without a reproof—that we may turn in time. The Divine Warning comes in diverse and unexpected ways. An aching face and a lame back have each their message from the Soul; and if we live an hour without the consciousness of love we shall directly be made aware of it. Though we skulk surreptitiously through the streets, a heavenly host is following and angels hover over us; for to what pinnacle shall we ascend, or to what

depths may we plunge, and not find there the love of God? Truly was it said of wisdom that her every path is peace; and knowledge is like oil poured upon the troubled waters.

The Infinite offers us this compensation—that it is in itself the promise of everything it has seemed to withhold or take away: a father to the fatherless, a child to the childless. The seeking of a lifetime, it is there; the aspirations of the illustrious, they are there. "It is only the finite that has wrought and suffered; the Infinite lies stretched in smiling repose." We live immersed in the wealth we seek; we are surrounded by the good to which we would attain. Here is the vale of Tempe; here are the Elysian fields. We shall cast the potent spell of thought over this world in solution, and out of it shall crystallize the objects of our true desire.

What of the Adepts, Arhats, Mahatmas—mysterious beings having control over the elements? You are the Adept who shall control your senses; you are the Mahatma of your own destiny, the appointed magician who shall cause the rod of daily life to blossom with lovely thoughts. The Spirit shall lead you on to all good things, and to it nothing is impossible. The will makes the way; and if it be the human will the way may be confusion, but if the Divine Will, it shall be peace and plentitude. You may be keeping accounts, and presently you shall walk out of the door that for so long has seemed to you the barrier of your ideals and shall find yourself before an audience—the pen still behind your ear, the ink-stains on your fingers—and then and there shall pour out the torrent of your inspiration.

You may be driving sheep, and you shall wander to the city—bucolic and open-mouthed; shall wander under the intrepid guidance of the Spirit into the studio of the Master, and after a time he shall say, "I have nothing more to teach you." Now you have become the master, who did so recently dream of great things while driving sheep. You shall lay down the saw and the plane to take upon yourself the regeneration of the world.

We are bounded by no horizon but that of the mind—held captive within imaginary circles. We shall meet with no barrier but that of our own thoughts. "Vaulting ambition" overleaps itself, but vaulting aspiration, never. Our deeds shall be commensurate with our ideals. "Hitch your wagon to a star." Hitch it to a comet, and if it takes you beyond one floating speck of earth you shall irradiate the heavens of some other. You who have waited this weary time, impatient to act, shall be hurled into the maelstrom of action. You who have for so long cherished the desire to think shall become the recipient of great thoughts, descending upon you like an avalanche. You who have yearned shall find your yearnings take shape, as the ghostly mist rises from out the forest—as from the transparent air at the cold touch of the mountain come beautiful forms and are made golden by the parting rays of sunlight. Your ideals are taking form, as trees planted grow while we sleep. Past your door rushes the current that will carry you to the goal; but you shrink within the doorway. Come out into the sun and wind!

XIII. THÈ SOUL OF NATURE

INTRODUCTION

THE AGES have wrought for concentration and have sought to bring all diffusion to a focus and to centralize all that was outlying. See all nebulæ brought to revolve about a center and to contract; shapeless chaotic mass by the law of sphericity made to rotate upon some axis—turned in the cosmic lathe,—and forth comes a beautiful luminous sphere. Out of the formless proceed beautiful forms; out of mass,—individuals. A stifling, seething, gaseous envelope gives place to pure air. The elements are concentrated in rock and soil, in oxide and chloride, nitrate and sulphate, in their progress to the ultimate physical state, and a grain of wheat is the summary of immense preparation and deep-laid plans. The diffused carbonic acid is collected in plants; vast reaches of the atmosphere are gleaned and sifted to form a cubic foot of coal. The land and the sea are pressed into service; countless ages, a myriad fauna and a vast flora are called into requisition to yield phosphates, silicates and carbonates,—and to produce gas and oil. The flame of this lamp is the voice of time and speaks in accents of fire of the prehistoric legions that have left this token of their existence. The gold in solution throughout the seas is deposited in primeval slates to be later united in quartz veins, freed by glaciers, sorted and collected by mountain streams and left in glittering grains

in gravel beds. The scattered iron of the soil is gathered in bogs, and various ores and minerals are collected in veins. Everywhere the unavailable is made available, the inaccessible made accessible.

Written on the face of rocks and in the color of the soil, inscribed boldly on mountains and gently in the valleys, written plainest in the fossil letters of the sandstones, of the slates and limestones, is the record of creation. First, a long dark night,—Archean abysmal. Then long ages with primordial lands and seas: a world tenanted only by Protozoa. A struggling upwards through radiates, and molluscs, square shouldered and antique; through crustaceans to the reign of trilobites, and on to the early race of ganoid fishes, clothed in scaly armor. An age of amphibians,—of vast swamps and marshes choked with ferns and simple plants; insects now flying here and there, but a world still flowerless,—songless. An age of reptiles, of huge ichthyosaurs and dinosaurs: a slow progression to the toothed and reptile ancestor of the birds; a gradual evolution to the marsupials; at last the advent of true mammals, and the encroachment of the arctic snows—a great ice age. A day of mammoths and mastodons and giant sloths; a present day of song-birds, of bony fishes, of true mammals, having possession of the air, the sea and the land; and man, the arch potentate having dominion over all, who through wisdom shall cause them to serve his advancement, who in ignorance may remain with them an animal. Genus has followed genus, type succeeded type,—a series of ever progressing forms appearing and departing to make room for those more worthy.

Working ever from lower to higher, evolving always a larger brain cavity, tending toward cephalization, reaching the ideal of cephalization and in man passing eventually to *spiritualization:* this is the ultimate, this the goal of evolution. As the more highly cephalized types are the fittest among animals, so the more spiritualized types are the fittest among men. Huge saurians with small brains have given way before small mammals with larger brains, in the progressive expression of intelligence; and the more spiritual races shall supplant the animal races of men, for in man that only which is in accordance with truth is fittest and shall survive.

The earth is a storehouse for the products of the sun. In its laboratories are myriad essences, perfumes, pigments,—in its workshops myriad types and patterns with which the Spirit is ever working; kingdoms, classes, and sub-classes, a host of orders, genera, species, and yet for each a place; each plays a part and is worthy of a name. A hundred thousand species of phenogamous plants, and as many flowerless species; ninety thousand species of beetles alone, and legions of ants, bees and wasps, of moths and butterflies, and all the rest; to say nothing of worms, molluscs, crustaceans, and the great class of vertebrates. All this perhaps but a bagatelle to the hosts that have become extinct. This vast multiplicity, this infinite diversity, referable to one source—the conception of one mind. The earth may be likened to an ark in which this great concourse takes its journey through the celestial spaces: turned right about every twenty-four hours and not in the least disturbed by it; covering thirty thousand meters

every second and unconscious of it; traversing unawares an immensity in the sublime orbit and resting unperturbed in the security of that One. In the course of one brief season of three-score years and ten we are hurled seventy times with enormous velocity around the sun, clinging like infinitesimal specks to the cooling surface of a white-hot projectile, rushing through swarms of meteors, traversing the far regions of space, and yet flying never remote from the love of God.

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The rough stone has been cut and polished and before us lies the gem in all its matchless splendor,—every facet the expression of a different beauty. Along the shore where in long broken lines the breakers roll in three deep, the loose dry sand is piled high and held in place by the marram-grass, the sturdy faithful friend of man. Resister of the encroaching sea, defiant alike of wind and wave, it is content upon barren sands where little else can live, and thrives where others perish. Growing amidst the hard glittering grains of quartz, destitute of phosphate and nitrate, destitute of the luxuries dear to plant life, it takes from the earth a little moisture, from the air a little carbon. Content with these necessities it leads a rugged life, the bulwark of the sandy coasts; and like the toilers of the sea and of the fields it has the simplest fare and the fewest wants.

Beside the country roads dwell the humble people of the wayside, and the immigrants from beyond the sea: ground ivy and bouncing-bet, and tansy,

pigweed and thistles. And there, too, grow the wind-fertilized, the lowly ones—grasses and plantains—the plain and homely, to whom was given no fragrance, no gay colors; these the children of the wind, the beloved of the southwind and the westwind. They are the solitary ones to whom come no bees, to whom no butterfly ever pays a friendly visit; who never hear the pleasant hum of insects, who secret no treasure but live thus unnoticed by the roadside, remembered only by the wind. Here also the vagabonds, burdock and sticktight, and all the despised who with a perseverance born of the virile force of nature, and with hooks and claws, hang their prickly fruit on the spaniel's ears and the collie's tail.

In the hillside pastures where boulders lie scattered as they were left by the retreating ice sheet, the mullein puts forth its great flannel leaves, and yarrow, and wild carrot, and stone-crop lead their hardy lives. Here where running cinquefoil and strawberry vines sparsely cover the rocky soil, meadow ants make their nests and pursue their routine of work amidst colonies of esculent puffballs. Concealed in the beard-grass at the foot of a straggling barberry, the field sparrow sits on her second batch of eggs, while field crickets take their way in inconsequent leaps under the dwarf sumacs and around stunted junipers, which perhaps serve them as vast and towering landmarks in their excursions abroad,—they who perceive the expanse of blue through distant openings in the sweet-fern overhead.

In the bogs the rich confusion of forms, the luxuriant aspect, makes real and contemporary the carboniferous age, where now is the home of orchids

and the haunt of the blacksnake and the bittern, where now the call of the catbird comes up from the alders. On the soft seal-brown wood of fallen hemlocks that have lain for years, on the rotting stumps of the first growth of the forest, are crowded mosses, lichens and mushrooms. The polyporus projects from leaning white birches, tier upon tier of buff and ashen-tinted shelves. Under hemlocks grows the chanterelle, and in the rich black earth the orange-milk mushroom, bright hued as some tropic blossom. The tangle of peat-moss is the home of myriad hunting spiders; a garden graced by the rose-purple adder's-mouth, and sometimes a white-fringed orchis. Liverworts grow like green scales at the water's edge; horse tails stand erect like quills. The osmunda circles round its fertile fronds, towering above creeping gold-thread and patches of wood-fern. There are water-arams and turtle-heads, loving well the water; there are sundew and pitcher-plants, skunk-cabbage and false hellebore, all dwellers in this woodland quiet. Such loveliness is there in the despised bog, such promise in decay, that from the ruins of a hemlock a garden of orchids springs.

So fair is the face of Nature, so winning is her smile, so expressive her grace and beauty, that it is not strange men would be content with this passing loveliness; should write sonnets to the moods, the smiles and frowns, but seldom an ode to the Soul of Nature. It is significant that men once believed in divinities of the woods and streams; saw them vanishing o'er the meadows; heard them whispering in the forest and laughing in the waters; that they once believed in Naiad and in Dryad. And it is still a

gentle custom in Japan when the land is bright with the cherry blossom and wistaria to write petitions and tie them to the flowering branches of the plum tree.

We no longer make offering to Ceres and to Neptune, no longer hear the pipes of Pan nor the lute of Orpheus, no longer pour libations of wine on the roots of the tulip tree; and all our nymphs are water-lilies. But none the less the Soul has not gone out of Nature; it is still the source of her perennial youth. Divinity within us makes solemn reverence to divinity in Nature; turns to the forest tree and there meets itself; sees itself in the squirrel nimbly climbing in its branches, in the saw-fly ovipositing in its leaves, in the larva worming its way beneath the bark; beholds itself in the violet at its foot, in the fish-hawk sailing overhead, in the cloud, in the sunshine and the rainbow.

The inspired votary admiring all beauty yet sees it is but the symbol. He reads the stars, learns history from the rock, love from the flower, and wisdom of the owl. Always he inquires, and nothing in nature is to him trivial or without meaning. Where did the ant acquire its language, the bee learn its geometry; how came the sand-wasp to lay up food for the offspring it may never see, the ichneumon to place its eggs in the living body of a larval moth? Who taught the insect to simulate a leaf, the partridge and the sandpiper to employ such artifice and dissimulation in the protection of their young? Whence came the faith of the gall-fly to trust the scrub oak to become the foster-parent of its progeny, or the cow-bird to rely upon oven-bird and vireo to

hatch her eggs and feed her young; and whence the foresight of the caterpillar that fastens to the tree the leaf on which it would pass the winter?

On the passes of the Himalayas turning in the hands of Bhutans and Thibetans, and revolving in the porticos of the temples among the clouds, there the prayer wheels proclaim with every revolution the jewel in the lotus. Where crawl the copper-head and moccasin, where roam the red fox and the deer, where live the caribou and beaver, where breed the brant and wild goose; in the cane-brake and the ash swamp, among the maples and the chestnuts, among the tamarack and balsams, here sparkles still this jewel in the lotus,—the self within the self, the Soul within all things, the all-pervading Spirit. And the naturalist that correlates all facts and perceives this underlying unity, while seeking in the bogs for orchids, and by the ponds for algæ, or traversing in exultation the crests of high sierras, may wander perchance to those Elysian fields where are the solemn tokens of the Word, and shall behold the fauna and the flora of a higher life. Then shall he see nature as the expression of divinity, as the Divine in him made manifest, and learn that the bluebird and the wood-thrush, the violet and the lady's-slipper is each a particular phase of the Divine Mind, its life history a glimpse of the process whereby God works.

It is essential to regard animals with kindly interest rather than with curiosity, to covet their good-will and not their bones and skin if we would have an insight into the nature of things. It is recorded as evidence of the *power of the mandibles* of a species

of staghorn beetle, that an individual confined in an iron canister, gnawed a hole in its prison and made its escape; so often does science emphasize the minutiæ while failing of a broad comprehension of nature as a whole; so prone is she to lay stress upon what is trivial, and to overlook that which is essential. But that a *beetle* should so love freedom, that a beetle should have the courage, the will, the determination, to overcome apparently insurmountable obstacles and gain its liberty, is a fact of no less than divine import, a fact so significant as to place the whole animal kingdom before us in a new light.

There is one thread of life ramifying in all forms, and it follows that all sentient life experiences certain emotions in common. The recognition of this identity throughout is the first step to a higher comprehension of nature and should be the fundamental axiom of scientific research; for it is the real province of science to investigate phenomena only in relation to principle, form as the embodiment of spirit, and life as the expression of love. It is not the academic but the spiritual mind which receives the true impression of nature, and which shall reveal the more significant truths, for it sees in bird and flowers not an aggregate of cells, nor a wonderful mechanism, but a *friend* the mystery of whose life is one with that of its own. Love is the key to the universe which unlocks all doors. It rests with the little child to gainsay the most eminent of vivisectionists. There is to the lover of nature, then, a certain obtuseness, not to say barbarity, in that not uncommon treatment of the biographies of animals, especially of game-birds and water-fowls, wherein such undue

stress is laid upon their conduct in dire emergencies. It betrays a callousness to those sufferings and emotions which are no less than human; how they act when wounded, whether diving or running, and what manner of defense they make; of song-birds, how they endure the loss of the eggs, how one will survive the loss of its mate taken as a specimen, and whether or not they pine in captivity. That such recountals should find any place in the life histories of birds and mammals is as incongruous as if in writing of the genus *Homo* we were to record as pertinent facts, that man when confined in a dungeon no longer sings and is dejected, that when his children are taken from him he is subject to uncontrollable grief and despair, that when wounded, if defenseless he uses all stratagem to escape, but if brought to bay will use tooth and nail in his poor hope of life, and is then dangerous to encounter.

It has been said that the tonic of nature is F Major. When the wind speaks through the forest, when the ocean resounds along the granite shore, it is thus they speak; and the hum of great cities and the manifold sounds of nature blend in this dominant major chord. There is then one key to which Nature is attuned; one keynote whose overtones range upward through the spheres of insight and of sympathy; and who dwells there must vibrate in unison. Strike the key-note of a bridge and the tone of a violin may set the structure in oscillation; strike the fundamental of the Soul and there shall ensue a rhythmical vibration. There is one keynote for Nature and for the Soul, and when it is sounded for one the other shall

respond, and node coincide with node, and wave with wave, in the sublime monotone.

SPRING

We march to the music of the spheres and are lighted by the radiance of a million suns; we live always on the eve of great discoveries and are the witnesses of unceasing wonders. Every man is born in an age of miracles and is the inheritor of immense beauty. Had the earth made but one rotation upon its axis, that spectacle of the rising and setting sun would be the marvel of the ages. Did but one rose bloom upon the earth we would build for it a temple; had but one bird been seen to spread its wings and sail into the sky, or but one butterfly to expand its gold and azure splendor upon the blossoms of the milkweed, we would long retain the memory of so fair a sight. He is happy who amidst the care and turmoil of the world cherishes in all perfection the innate love of the beautiful: who regards with joy and wonder and reverence the procession of infinite beauty which flows perpetually from the Great Soul of the universe.

Nature exacts more than passing admiration; she would have worship. To this end she importunes, with persistence and unremitting patience besieges us, and undertakes with every crude semblance of a man the culture of that germ of true life—the perception of the beautiful. Year by year she revolves for him her seasons; appeals to him with the springtime—the Primavera; brings thick and fast in sweet confusion all the flowers, columbines and bellworts,—medeola and twisted-stalk and trilliums; spreads

a carpet of houstonia and yellow cinquefoil, and stars the grass with dandelions; leads him by still waters and smooths for him a couch of violets. She withholds no charm but lavishes a wealth of beauty in common things: in fresh-ploughed fields and April skies, in apple blossoms and buttercups, and country lanes in lilac time, in the rosy breasts of grosbeaks and the indigo blue of buntings, in the ruby throats of humming-birds and the pensile nests of vireos, in the blue of robins' eggs and the mottled eggs of sparrows; in the languid fluttering of cabbage-butterflies, the marvelous flight of swallows and the easy poise of buzzards, in the peeping of frogs and the hum of bees, in pattering rain-drops and lapping waves. She writes a prayer in every flower and incites the thrush to singing hymns; is eloquent of her purpose in star and cloud and tree, that men may at last look up, may rise to the heights of worship and be lead "through Nature to Nature's God."

Have you found the closed and hidden flowers of violets, or seen high upon the spruce the crimson beauty of its fertile blossom? Have you seen the yellow warbler lay a floor over the cowbird's eggs,—the carpenter-bee take nectar from the pinxter-flower; heard the jubilant song of oven-bird, so different from its call, or the plaintive noonday note of the chickadee? Do you know why among the birds the females are so plainly dressed; and have you sought the reason and purpose of songs and insect sounds, of the nectar and perfume of blossoms? Natural and sexual selection do not explain all; there remains yet the economy of beauty which must be served. Creation is not the sole end of creation;

not the mere renewal of types, but the perpetuation of a scheme of harmony. Science would have it that beauty exists to serve the ends of reproduction, but it is rather reproduction which but subserves the beautiful.

The seasons mark the rhythmic expansion and contraction of life—the outbreathing and inbreathing of the Infinite. Spring is Nature's darling—the fair one; her gentle admonition to the jaded world to renew, forever to renew; to cast off dry custom and tradition and the sear and lifeless habits of thought, as the tree its withered leaves, and to renew the mind that it may be transformed as by a newer and a fresher verdure.

While memories of falling snows and blustering winds are fresh there comes a gentle south wind and scatters flakes from the lap of Flora—brings the bloodroot and the shadbush, and the drifts of wood-anemones. Red cherry and dogwood and viburnums come in quick succession; unbounded freshness, unbounded verdure—emerald and olive and apple. There is the green of alder and willow, the green of cherry and birch—of upland and lowland, meadow and swamp. The pollen of the pitch pine rises like incense and the air is heavy with its fragrance. The bursting buds of beech and hickory, the new glory of the red and white oaks, and in the swamps the red haze of flowering maples—all apprize us of solemn and joyful rites; the fête for which the year is a preparation, for which there are canopies of apple blossoms, and carpets of violets laid.

Now should we go into the woods and fields and listen to the glad song of love. Great is the sun's

love for the earth; sweet and inspiring the epithalamium of spring, which is written in the language of flowers in verses of myriad blossoms; which is sung and chirped and croaked from every meadow and every fence-post, from the roadside and the frog pond; in the guttural croak of cuckoos and the sputter and creak of the grackle, in the hoarse clatter of kingfishers and the cheery call of the bob-white, in the sweet wild music of the purple finch and the tender lay of warbling vireo, and in the bobolink's joyous and irrepressible jingle; which is evidenced in every mode and rate of vibration throughout the mystic gamut of sound and perfume and color; carried on beyond the highest note we hear, beyond the violet of the spectrum and all actinic rays. From the first bluebird's warble and the opening chorus of green frogs, from the coming of the arbutus and the first blossom of hepatica, one theme divine there is.

Yesterday the woods were silent; today they are merry with the sound of many voices, and bright with the gleam of the green and gold, the orange and blue of migrating warblers. It is a wonderful invasion this, with its advance line spanning continents; black-throated and orange-crowned, blue-winged and bay-breasted—they come, flitting from tree to tree; wanderers from afar that travel over land and sea, from the Orinoco to the St. Lawrence, and take no thought but trust in the Infinite Love.

The sylvan voice of the kinglet, subdued and liquid as the sound of water running underground, recalls faun and satyr. The clear whistle of the oriole and the brave sweet notes of the cardinal rise from locust and sycamore and are carried over the mill pond.

It is bold and free this reverie; fraught with memories of some Provencal of birdland, and with suggestions of the oleander and the orange, and of the cherokee rose. There is a darting flame among the elms; there is a flash of scarlet in the apple trees, and a glance of redwings wheeling in the sunlight.

From myriad throats ascends the morning hymn of the birds,—the measured and rhythmical chant of the children of the air. The great chorus rises and falls, rises and falls, as it comes forth from the heart and throat of Nature—her Pilgrims' chorus. Softly it opens with the note of the pewee, and is taken up by song-sparrows and robin, growing louder and stronger with voices of catbird and oriole, until swelled to majestic volume it ascends in superb hymn of praise, led by the devotional song of the wood-thrush, rising clear and sweet and instinct with the spirit of worship.

There are pattering rain-drops on the leaves and shining drops upon the grass; there is the sweet low cadence of its ceaseless falling. From sparrow and catbird comes a twittering and the sound of ruffling plumage as they stroke and oil their feathers. There is a tenderness, a great friendliness in these gentle showers that conveys a certain note of well-being and assurance to the listening ear. Here, again, is Nature's suggestion of renewal appealing to that conviction common to most men, that sometime, somehow, it shall be expedient to efface from memory the unsightly scrawls and wash the mind clean; to renounce all foregone conclusions, begin life again, and sow a new crop in a virgin soil; to arise on some admirable morning from a transforming slumber

to the realization of a new day,—a new world. And this is the possibility the hours carry with them.

What if the spring is backward, the sun has none the less reached his accustomed place. In due time shall the Spirit illumine the bog of daily thought, and in its midst may appear the white-fringed orchis of the Soul. Our faith, like the aurora in this latitude, is fitful and uncertain; but we may reach higher latitudes and dwell in purer regions of thought where perchance it shall be constant. Welcome these gleams of thought that play upon the horizon that they may kindle to a steady glow. The Spirit is ever ready with its communications. In the flash of insight the Soul reveals the path of light; the vision is clarified and the whole being infused with the glory and sanity of the moment. Then only are we awake. Every question is answered, every doubt is dispelled in one gleam of the Soul. We shall count our hours of life from one such moment to another. They are epochs; they are the rings of growth whereby we may see how long we have truly lived.

The twig grows and buds, supported by the whole great system of root and branch—earth and sun; but cut off, it withers; and it is for us to draw from that source which is infinite. The heart beats and the lungs expand without conscious effort; why, then, this painful exertion to regulate and to map out life? We have but to live in close communion with the source of love and wisdom and our lives shall be beautifully ordered. The glare of sunlight is dear to the saxifrage, and the goldthread loves the twilight of the hemlocks and the society of moss and fern. A moist and sheltered spot is the haunt of

groundnut and adder's-tongue; a rocky cleft is graced by the regal columbine, and the wild pink loves a sand bank. All goes to show that there is a place for each, a sphere of action, a particular beauty; and to all come influences beneficent. The clover waits for the bee and the orchid for the moth. Not he that runs but he that stands and lowly listens shall hear the oracle. Unto every soul would Nature give her balm. To the lonely she whispers, "Trust"; to the timid, "Courage." To one she says, "Act," and to another, "Wait"; while to each and every one she whispers, "Love."

Why this distinction between Art and Nature? Wherein can Art improve on Nature, who is herself foremost of sculptors and painters? We are accustomed to consider Nature as the actual, Art the ideal, where in fact Art is but the recognition—the grasping and picturing of the ideal in Nature. Are there sunsets on canvas such as we have witnessed from our windows; faces more majestic than we have encountered on the street? But Art is clear-eyed and discerning and grasps that which Utility fails to see. We see in Nature the compass of our minds; we shall measure her and sound her that we may determine our own depth and breadth. He who has discovered little beauty within finds but little without; and he who has realized great beauty within, sees it overflowing in Nature. And so Art looks at Nature and perceives the ideal, and Utility looks and sees only that which will lift and carry, which will produce and multiply—earn and increase. If a man loves the woods there is in him something of their sincerity and straightforwardness. and if he love the mountains,

he retains somewhat of their grandeur and simplicity; for we ever seek in the world of form what best expresses the idea within us, and by our tastes and pursuits divulge what manner of man we are.

When the mellow sunshine has warmed the earth and it blossoms forth in beauty, when the air is redolent with bayberry and sweet-fern and the wild rose is in its glory, he who sits in rapt devotion and ponders all this mystery, perceives that the Soul is the cause ineffable—all beauty but the effect. For the sublimity of snowy range, the delicacy of an orchid, the soft radiance of an afternoon in spring,—all the delicacy and the wonder and the harmony of Nature are but the shadows of that inner life; within, within—rests the sublimity of which these are the radiant symbols.

SUMMER

The dog-star has faded from the evening sky and the dogwood from the hillside and the wood-lot. Far into the night have the Pleiades gone; into the night too have departed starflower and anemone. Orion's splendor is now a memory,—a memory the hum of bees in the apple blossoms, and berry and fruit recall a host of gentle flowers. Out of the twilight comes Lyra the beautiful, and Cygnus lies over the Milky Way.

Wood roads are gay with foxgloves and starry campions, and lanes are fringed with wild carrot as with a border of lace worked in flaming patterns of Black-eyed Susan and vivid hue of milkweeds. In deep shades the black cohosh raises tall and ghostlike its white racemes, and the lovely meadow lily hangs

its head—fitting cap for elf and sprite. The salt marsh is brightening with the roseate flowers of swamp mallow—a flower garden in a wilderness of cord-grass and cat-tails. Where blue flags not long since were blooming, there sparkles now the silvery leaf of jewelweed. On the ponds are floating yellow pond-lilies, and nymphæa, the queenly water-lily, reigns supreme. Sundew and adder's-mouth are flowering side by side in the cranberry bogs, and pools are fringed with pickerel-weed and arrow-head. Look for meadow-sweet and hardhack in the pastures, where clover and mullein are interspersed with grasses now ripe and brown, and wood-lilies lift their petals above the huckleberry patch. Gentle signs of midsummer these, of the season of fulness and completion, of repose and contemplation; and the white pine invites us to sit beneath its shade that it may be to us the bo-tree of our meditations.

The dandelions have become balls of down,—clusters of silken parachutes attached to as many brown seeds. Each parachute shall carry its seed out into the world; impelled by the purpose of an infinite mind it shall sail dreamily away, over fence and hedge, over road and ditch,—now sailing high, now skimming low. Strong winds shall blow it, gentle breezes waft it, until it floats quietly down into some cool green pasture where amid the red-top and the sorrel the seed shall end its travels. There the summer sun shall beat upon it; it shall be covered by the brown October leaves of beech and chestnut, or perchance a maple leaf shall be its canopy of red and gold. Deep beneath the snows

of winter shall it lie, unknown, forgotten save by that One whose pulse within it beats. But when the frost leaves the ground and the warm rains of spring bring again the message of life, the Eternal One shall manifest itself; the seed shall perish but the Spirit of Life shall arise in leaf and stem and blossom, and the smiling faces of the dandelions grace anew the redtop and the sorrel. Such is the resurrection of a flower. Then comes the young bumble-bee trying for the first time his wings and glad in his new existence; burly, noisy and impetuous, he bends low the shining flowers, and deep within the nectar tubes intrudes his tongue. Dusty with pollen he speeds away on his two-fold mission—the portentous buzzing little match-maker. So are there always dandelions for little hands to pick, and brown seeds for goldfinches and blue buntings to eat, and little silken parachutes to sail away on the summer breeze; and the One manifests eternally—He whose name is Love.

In the early summer the wild geranium blossoms in the recesses of the woods, seeking the shade of chestnut and black birch and tulip tree; there in the haunts of the oven-bird little companies dwell together, living in sweet serenity their peaceful wood life and hearing only distantly of the world without from the vireo or the gray squirrel overhead. Subdued is the light in these woodland haunts; subdued and gentle is the life of these flowers. Sheltered are they from sun and wind, and so they live and pray; for their lives are their prayers—silent as are all true prayers—but expressed in petal and sepal, in stamen and pistil, and answered in pod and seed and capsule. Thus do prayers ascend from the sequestered

glens; and as we watch the rose-purple petals gently falling to the leaf-mould we shall know they have been answered.

Yet another company worships in the depths of the white-pine forest. In Nature's own cathedral where the straight trunks and arching branches are as the vault and pillars of a Gothic nave and choir, the pale tribe of the Indian pipes live in silence and devotion, lighted by the slanting rays of sunlight, and hearing—like an organ sweet and low—the distant chanting of the west wind.

The end of enchantments is not yet. There is a spell cast over every pasture where chirps a cricket, and who walks there and does not feel it is a prince of the uninspired and his realm the commonplace. There is a witchery in the twilight, and nodding harebell is an incantation,—the sweetbrier a potent charm. There is a mind in vegetable and mineral and in the humblest creeping thing—and interrelation between all. Question the oak and it will answer; deny it speech and to you it is silent.

Let us not mow and shear and prune until the landscape has become a mush of propriety, and the eye of character finds nowhere a dear rugged spot on which to rest. Let a man preserve his love of the wild; let him cherish the savage and solitary aspects—tamarack swamp, and rushing stream, the granite dome rising above forest of spruce. Society will never restore the lost virtues of the savage. When we can stand and watch the black bear disconsolate in his pitiless cage, or the eagle fierce and defiant in his solitary confinement, and feel no kinship, no regret,—a virtue has surely gone from us.

Let us seek the stern companionship of the stars which fails not, and grapple with hooks of steel the solemn friendship of mountain range and encircling ocean. There is poetry in the sky—rich, varied and endless, the immeasurable Soul projected before us and made visible; there is sweet solace in the clouds and jovial good-fellowship in the tried and trusty sun.

The perpetual miracle of the fields shames the unnecessary and interpolated miracle of tradition. Little Science stands hat in hand before a cherry pit—wondering, puzzled! Peer into a seed,—the magician's outfit is simple; consider this granite,—only feldspar and the rest. But bring the one to the other and a mighty witchery is let loose. Rain and frost conspire together that clay shall be transmuted into hue of poppy and the bloom of plum. Miracles? Shut in the seedsman's box are waiting the squire's lawn and my lady's bower, the rich farm and the stately avenue; a pansy bed in an envelope, a clover field in a quart measure—and a pot of honey to boot. Pass round the measure—the trick will ne'er be revealed. Spade or hoe is the magician's wand. Such is the order of the practical thaumaturgy, the wholesome witchery which operates for the children of men. A fakir and a mango seed, a rishi and a rope—water turned to wine,—what are these to the honest miracles of a peck of corn made glistening fields; a seedlet, blown by the wind, become the welcome shade of village elm; a dainty egg become fire-bird's mellow note?

Nature offers a liberal bonus in the furtherance of her creative work: nectar for bee and moth and

butterfly, and she tempts man and bird with fruit and berry. She wraps the seed in the luscious covering of cherry and apple that it may be scattered abroad and new trees planted. But we are not to mistake for extravagance that which is indeed a safety factor in her calculation and incident to the general scheme of economy—an economy that is all-pervading. Plant and insect serve each other: every peculiarity in the structure of a flower is adapted to some insect visitor,—it shall fit the head of a bee or the tongue of a moth. Devices and contrivances there are without number and of passing ingenuity to insure cross-fertilization to the ends of perfection and beauty: nectar, and color, and fragrance all for the self-same ends, and all lacking in wind-fertilized blossoms—for the wind is indifferent to such charms. And see how sumac and oak and blackberry obey the summons of the gall-fly and build for its egg a house so cunningly contrived as to expand and keep pace with the maturing grub, and to provide it food and shelter all in one; and the spider will lay her cocoon of eggs in the abandoned gall, when cracked and empty it hangs on a branch of the scrub oak. The horsehair from the road will line chipping sparrow's nest; the deserted hole of woodpecker will serve chickadee or nuthatch; and the crumbling branch of the apple tree contents the house-wren which from its withered twigs pours out its wealth of song, and in its decaying recesses rears a family and enacts a history which in common with greater ones knows joys and sorrow, knows tenderness and care—aye, and love and faith. Not a grain of dust but shall be molded and fashioned to forms

of beauty! Nature will have no loss and no waste; superbly she maintains her balance. An excess of thistles brings a flock of goldfinches to devour the seeds and restore the equilibrium; kingbird will look out for grasshoppers, and oriole for canker worms. Vultures, and beetles, and ants will be her scavengers.

On the stern and rugged coast where the waves forever meet the resistance of the slowly yielding granite, where once were ancient dykes—solid walls of diabase running far into the sea—are sometimes left in places but deep and narrow chasms into which the incoming sea rushes with the sound of far-off thunder. There the walls are hung with rockweed and with countless numbers of the rich-hued sea-anemones, and the floors are covered with Irish moss, and kelp, and branching sertularia. Between tide marks, barnacles and mussels crowd the surface of the brown and weathered granite, and in the clefts and crannies of the rock dwell in endless reverie the starfish and sea-urchins. There unnumbered whelk and limpets live their nomadic dream-life, sometimes slipping down from rock to rock and again carried upward by the tide; the sport of wind and wave, they live as do those men who believe in fate and are the trembling victims of a tyrant circumstance—nor yet have learned to trust and pray.

O for the sound of the waves and the smell of the sea,—for a sight of the trackless, glittering, open sea, which makes the heart of youth beat faster and the lungs expand their utmost with its bold suggestion of a life of freedom and adventure; which casts its potent spell upon the hardy mariner that has thrown aside his charts and steered for parts unknown

in his search for the golden fleece of truth! To him it is a calm and restful presence which dispels all fractious thought and lulls to sleep the senses with its subtle and dreamy cadence, leaving the mind quiescent but uplifted and receptive to the visions of a higher life; it strikes from the mind its shackles that it may go roving, fearless, free to the land of pure and shining thought, of transcendent aspirations, of great promise and fulfilment: that land beyond the waters which is hidden to the fuddled dreams we call our waking hours, but may be seen in high relief by the mind in dreamless sleep—to be recalled in deepest meditation.

When for the first time we exclaim at some radiant constellation which has nightly shone upon us, or at the delicacy of some flower once trodden underfoot, then is the first step taken in the economy of spiritual things. On the birth of a thought the eye discloses the heretofore unseen, and we come to reason that seen and unseen may be distinctions without a difference—may be but the extremes of an infinite series; that the unseen is but the measure of the defects of our present vision, as the so-called supernatural is but the natural not yet comprehended. The beauty of the heavens and of the flowers belongs to us only as we develop the capacity to enjoy and understand them; and in the development of spiritual capacity all things gravitate to us—and so shall be reclaimed the unseen.

In the darkness of the summer night the fireflies gleam and glitter as they flit across the background of the forest; and they dance upon the meadows to the music of the tree-toads and the crickets,—the

weird and mystic elf-dance of the fireflies. Like ships that we pass in the night, we see only their lights, as by means invisible carried, as they flash upon us and are gone to an unknown destination. Out of the night come the fireflies—points of light that glimmer and vanish; out of the night of the unknown has come our life to be seen but for a moment and to disappear. Where is the mystery in this? The beetle continues its flight beyond our ken and wheels again into the field of vision. And souls traversing the highways of the universe,—may they not pass and repass and wheel in and out of the spiritual field of vision?

With the power of the Spirit almost untried and the possibilities of prayer as little known, with the inheritance of love still unclaimed and the ocean of truth yet unexplored, life is full of an immensity of purpose. When we live in harmony with the soul of Nature, seeing what wealth of light and air, of life and love are ours, we shall learn that all efforts to embellish life were futile; that life—real life—is complete in its just measure of happiness, and the sense of want and incompleteness but an indication that we do not yet truly live,—the goad of the Spirit to a nobler, diviner life.

AUTUMN

October days! October days! These are the idyllic days,—the richest, ripest, mellowest days of all the year; when the tupelo and dogwood are arrayed in autumn colors; when the chestnuts and the wild grape are waiting for the frost, and the yellow pumpkins glisten in the fields where the corn is

stacked for husking; when the windfalls of winter apples lie rotting in the grass, and the buckwheat is ready for the cradle and the flail. The young brown snakes are basking in the sandy roads, and mud-daubers swarm about the south windows in search for winter quarters. The bee-hunter liberates from his box the captive bee and follows its flight with keen eye, as it circles first above his head and then takes its way straight to the hollow black ash or maple where is hid its store of honey, gleaned early from the clover and the basswood and later from buckwheat and goldenrod.

Hark to the music of the locust and the cricket, the song of halcyon days, the song of the triumph of creation: a sound that proceeds from the hidden springs of being,—causative, elemental in its significance. Now shall we sit in the golden light, the gentle effulgence of the autumn day; feeling the spell of that wondrous light which irradiates the inner recesses of the mind and starts a train of ecstatic thought, which holds the attention to what is real; now pass through the gateway of the seeming out into the sublime and enduring real. All nature is full of the suggestion of that somewhat finer higher life which is not distant in time nor space, nor separate from this present seeming life, but inherent in it as its essential and highest quality,—as cream is distributed sometime to rise and become the best value of the milk.

A vast complexity of relationship devolves upon creation through the necessity for food; there is no form, high nor low, but is food for some other,—worm for bird, bird for man, man for worm. Creation

moves in cycles, and the progress of life seems a vast phantasmagoria. But the light of the Spirit dissolves all this mystery as the sun dispels the mist, for it is in the Spirit that all creatures have their life. There is no death and no decay, only ceaseless mutation of one form into another; and back of name and form, back of all that is apparent to the senses is the One—formless, changeless, eternal!

Into this world of form has descended the soul of man: man the epitome of evolution, the acme of concentration, the summary of creation—himself a creator. Behold that which was once reptile, rodent, insect; which was once four-footed and ate grass, or crouched in the jungle and sprang upon its prey, now walking erect and looking to the heavens—a soul incarnate, yet clothed in the form of a thousand thousand savage progenitors, and holding still a relation to all creatures that is intimate and vital. It has been said that every animal represents some quality in human nature or rather that human nature embodies all of these; and it would seem that the disappearance of the lower and the dominion of the higher types is coincident with the evolution of the mind from its lower and baser qualities. There are hawks and doves, there are lions and lambs—and apes, among men; more than this, a man shall find the wolf and the sheep, the fox and the crow in his own nature. Man, who has evolved from language, literatures,—from thought, philosophies; the historian of his fellow creatures and the biographer of races that perished before he was known upon the earth; he who has intuition where they have instinct, free-will where they observe necessity,—shall he not

elect a higher course than is prescribed for his humble brethren? Shall his ethics stop short of the cow and the sheep, that he should slaughter the one which gives him milk, the other which provides him clothes?

This ant which we crush underfoot,—in that minute thorax works a marvelous mechanism, in those tiny limbs is a strength Herculean; that Lilliputian brain is the seat of an intelligence differing from man's only in degree. There it crawls—the atom: one of a community living according to a system and performing with tireless persistence its appointed duties; wise enough to work with reference to a plan, to build its domicile, to communicate with its fellows; unwise enough to hold slaves, and suffering the inevitable consequences: a black speck—the living repository of a mystery that lies beyond all science—an atom capable of some thought—a miracle of miracles.

Because we have loved the wolf's brother, from a snarling, howling, savage beast lurking in caves and in the forest, he has come to be our companion—faithful, noble, gentle, true; ready to serve us; lavishing his affection upon us; giving his life for us; pining and refusing consolation when separated from us. Look into the beautiful eyes of a noble dog and you will feel that there too do you perceive the intimations of the Soul; and this which is true of the dog is true in a degree of all creatures—if they could have but half a chance. This collie, sensitive as a child, of unerring and delicate instinct, superior in intelligence to many illiterate men, superior in kindness to some scholarly men, capable of communicating important things in his own peculiar language,—

what would he be had he been hunted like the fox?

O the downtrodden people of the forests and the prairies! O the hunted people of the mountains and the streams! Farewell to the buffalo and the moose; farewell to the wild pigeon and the heron! There is left a great array of foes where might be friends; and this the commentary on man's ruthlessness. But see the fine working of the law: not with impunity shall he thus devastate; an eye for an eye. Unto the destroyer passes the burden of fear. He that destroys what he cannot replace, destroys therewith the finer workings of his own nature, and benumbs those sensibilities which alone made him susceptible of a higher development. He trembles who caused the innocent to tremble; he is fearful who made the defenseless to fear.

The host of the innocent cry aloud; they petition us incessantly. To lie in ambush and shoot a defenseless creature is a dastard's deed. O hunter, the tongue that might have licked your hand hangs from the mouth; the eyes that would have looked affection from their clear depths have appealed in vain for mercy—despite their superb eloquence; the heart that once felt the pulsations of a strong life, that cherished affections similar to your own—but which knew not the strife and hate of your own—has ceased! The gentle life has gone, whither you fear to go—taking with it what was noble, bequeathing to you what was brutish. You have seen Nature through the sights of a rifle and she in turn has taken your peace of mind with the phantoms of the air. The giant of the forest has quailed before you, and

you, manikin, tremble at the pigmies of the microscope. You have given your measure of anguish to the denizen of the woods, and it is meted to you again; you have taken her cubs from the bear, and your children are taken from you; you have denied the oneness of all life, and you are riding the nightmare of death. You have played the tyrant, and you are confronted by the inscrutable.

Though the birds are silent, yet is their silence eloquent; though they do not sing, still they are imploring. Up from the marshes and the fens, from the salt marshes and the bayous, from the woodland and the pasture, from the clearing and the coppice comes the plaint of these little martyrs,—the martyrs whose woes are all but unrecorded, whose sufferings are almost unnoticed; who die innocent of all but beauty.

The little ones, the frail ones, the spirits of the air appeal to the women; to whatsoever in them is womanly, to whatsoever in them is motherly, to all gentleness, to all tenderness, to all that is human, to all that is divine; beseeching that they may live in peace and be unmolested. Imploring pity! Imploring mercy! Imploring justice! We serve you and you spurn us; we cheer you and you deny us; we love you and you kill us. You who profess a religion that is based on love, is there in your hearts no love for us? You who ask favors of Him who made us all, will you not grant us then our lives? You who love, you who suffer, can you not feel for us who do the same? You who bring forth children, cherish them, work for them; is it nothing that we too make our homes and tenderly care for our little ones?

When you bend beneath the burden of some fresh sorrow, then think of us who suffer at your hands. When you are elated with some new joy and would express your gratitude, then say a word for us. You who have but loving tenderness for your husbands and your brothers, remember us—your *little brothers*.

We see you upon the streets and in the churches; we see you praying for the dying, and upon your hats we see the corpses of our nestlings and our mates. Long have you been insensible to us; now listen to the truth. We are the messengers of peace and the symbols of the Spirit. Whenever you sacrifice us you surrender your nobleness to your vanity; whenever you deny us freedom you thereby enslave yourselves. For the cruelty you show us you suffer the tyranny of your unconquered selves; for your thoughtlessness toward us you remain unthinking to your own higher interests; for the proffered love which you reject you shall one day pray in sorrow. You have been deaf to our plea but you must hear us; we are calling—ever calling to you to awaken from your dream; we exhort you to be true to what is best within you, true to what is merciful and what is just, true to what is womanly and what is noble.

The intelligence which is around and within us inspires us to speak the truth to you, to tell you that without love there can be no true art; for what does not spring from love is not art but gross deformity. If we are beautiful it is because of the spirit of life which animates us; and when you sever that thread there is naught left to you of beauty, but only the deserted temple, the token of your desecration. When you would decorate yourselves with the bodies of

your victims you revert to what is barbarous; you become as the untutored savage with his crude and horrid ornaments. The clothes bespeak the woman and her degree of cultivation; we would have you stand for culture and what is refined in art and life; we would have you dress as becomes the mothers of a noble race.

We look to you for the courage of right conviction to defy an ignoble fashion and express simplicity and truth in dress,—to stand for us the oppressed, the hunted children of the air. And we would have you impress upon your children how noble a thing is love, how grand a thing it is to be kind to all that live.

Thus do we speak in mournful yet trusting accents to the loving hearts of all true women, asking that we be kept no longer without the pale of your ethics and religion, asking that in your hearts you make a place for us—your little brothers.

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For once may we throw appearance and deceits to the winds and learn the worth of simplicity, the solemn joy, the relief of being natural; stand erect under the pines and thank God for a breath of mountain air; stoop by the brook and be grateful for a drink of cold water,—cold water for which were it taken away we would sell everything, give years, money, jewels for a cupful, when Hock and Burgundy would be as gall and wormwood,—cold water which is priceless and which is free. For one brief season may we forget what we have and what we've bought,—we the lotus-eaters lost to the memory of a false

environment; be free of the encumbrance of luxuries and possessions and go into the October woods there to be seated in amity with our kinsmen, the partridge and the quail, the gray squirrel and the bluejay, and be even as they—without pretense. There shall we sit in the wise company of the chipmunk and the woodchuck and with them partake of what is free. The table shall be garnished with berries, red, white, black and mottled—dwarf cornel and baneberry, maianthemum and false Solomon's-seal; and hung round with garlands of woodbine and bittersweet. The cloth shall be worked in rare designs with the gray-green fronds of sticta and parmelia and the bright green of hairy cap, and feathery mosses, interspersed with cladonias' scarlet fruiting cups, and through all a delicate tracery of partridge vine and fronds of polypodia. We shall feast on green russula, shaggymane and oyster mushrooms, and shall be regaled with butternuts and hazel, chestnut and hickory; there shall be wild grapes and wild red raspberries more delicate than ever hothouse knew. There shall be wafted to us odors more than savory, aye, exhilarating; odors of sweetbrier and myrtle, the spicy aroma of green butternuts and the wholesome resinous fragrance of balsam, of spruce and hemlock. There shall be flavors and seasoning fit for any woodman's palate: sassafras and wintergreen, wild ginger and cherry birch. We shall listen to the tapping of the downy woodpecker and the cry of the red-shouldered hawk; be soothed by the rustling of the leaves and the voices of the woods.

Along the rocky shores and all the country roadsides gleams the purple and the gold of goldenrod

and asters. It is the fringe of the autumn mantle, the garment of brilliant colors; on the oaks it lies in brown and scarlet, on the beeches glistens yellow, from the maples flashes crimson. It is the work of the Great Colorist who now works in emerald, azure, Tyrian, and again transforms all verdure with a sweep of his magic brush and clothes with a great beauty the lowly shrub and vine, and makes glorious the hobble-bush and huckleberry. It is no fable that the Lord speaks from the burning-bush.

This is the old age of the leaves; venerable, majestic, reflecting the dignity of a life of beauty and of usefulness, they prepare for the return to the mother world. In obedience to a silent command they appeared and spread over the earth—a tide of green setting to the north; and now they as silently retire—a sea of gold. In a scarlet and crimson and golden glory is written the classic of autumn, the requiem of the leaves. It is written in the burning notes of color,—color which plays upon the emotions like music; color which is as psychical as the harmonies of sound. They have performed their Herculean labors; they have fed the forest; they have clothed the earth. Behold them resplendent in their age, clothed with the majesty of the sun—transfigured! And we, when our retreat is sounded, shall not we reflect the glory of a noble departure; shall not we likewise become radiant,—be transfigured?

Like some of her children, Nature hybernates; no sooner asleep than she dreams a dream, and they who watch her asleep and dreaming say it is now the Indian summer. Perhaps the essence of the tobacco-plant pervades her slumbers; perchance there are

poppies in her dream. The brilliant company of the sumacs are to her a band of warriors, gaily decked in paint and feathers. Around the sagamore sit the old men and in silence smoke the peace-pipe. From the wigwams the smoke ascends in the soft and balmy air—curling upward in thin blue lines. She dreams of youth, of bees and flowers, and hears again the love-songs of the birds; listens to the trilling of the wren and kinglet; listens to the warbling vireo and the drumming of the partridge; listens to the love-notes of the wood-thrush and the robin. Obedient to the spell of this fair dream the little breeze comes joyfully back; looks for youth and finds but age; looks for its playmates, the columbines and bellworts, and finds but yellow blossoms of witchhazel and here and there a gentian. It wonders at the silent bands of myrtle birds and juncos, and the flocks of white-throat sparrows; sees how the white oaks have drawn around them their mantles of brown and withered leaves, and shrinks away abashed; whispers to the gray squirrel as he throws aside the rustling leaves, but he heeds not, for he is busy planting forests.

WINTER

It comes! The snow! The invasion of a dazzling host; the silent onslaught of the children of cold! Whirling, driving, twisting, it descends upon us from the upper regions of the air,—charging in a sinuous wavy advance. Rushing forward, careering onward, comes the gay, mad, swirling charge of the mimic fairy foemen. Maneuvering in battalions, massing in phalanx,—gyrating, impetuous, resistless,—the

array of crystal beauty is launched upon us; and who would not invite this superb charge, this shining foray of the beautiful? Out from the glittering hordes now and again is one detached; bereft of the frenzied impetus of the swirling masses and left to settle gently down upon the coat sleeve, the fairest, purest crystal midget, an infinitesimal jot of the vast elemental invested for the moment with divine form, a tiny marvel claiming our admiration. It lingers for an instant, and there is left but a trace of moisture; the investiture of graceful form, the *chef d'œuvre* of miniature loveliness, eludes us and is gone.

Lo, the soft enchantment of the snow; a world in white, a fairy scene of bending boughs and gleaming bowers. Every twig of birch and alder is incrusted with the clinging snow, and it lies heavy on drooping branches of white pine and spruce. Silently and wonderfully is the earth transformed; she has donned her radiant garments of light. The hemlock assumes the ermine and is majestic in its robes, and oak and maple acquire a new dignity. The snow-fleas come to leap upon the snow, arising like fabled warriors from dragon's teeth, and whirling flocks of snow-birds drive free before the wind.

Blessed be the stillness of the winter day, where silence reigns supreme. Frozen are the ponds and rivers, and the fields lie hidden beneath the drifted snow. A fall of temperature works miracles; congeals what was fluid; petrifies soil and loam, and traces on window panes its cherished arboreal designs, spreading with lavish hand in graceful inflorescence, panicles and racemes of glittering frostwork. It spreads over country roads a polished layer

of ice, galvanizing into life the frozen particles and investing them with the pitch and *timbre* peculiar to intense cold so that they respond in shrill and resonant protest to the runners of swift-passing sleighs.

As summer is the season of contemplation so is winter the time of brisk thought, brisk action. No longer are we to stroll by the wayside, no more to sit in rapt meditation; but to leave the cheer and comfort of the hearth and plunge into the gelid world without,—meeting with joy the bleak and bitter north winds; to run nimbly over the frozen crust rejoicing in the possession of an immense and buoyant vigor, of an energy that stops at nothing,—a will that dares bid the timid sun stand in his course; to leave the outskirts of the town and stride into the solitude of the winter woods and fields. The earth is muffled, mute in its mantle of snow and ice, and traverses in sublime silence its wintry way; carrying faint suggestions of that long glacial winter which covered hill and valley beneath a polar ice-cap until forced by a more genial sun to its arctic lair. But today the uncovered ledges tell their story,—tell it like old men with whom the past is ever present; who walk with tottering footsteps the ground they once trod so firmly, and pause with bending head where once they skipped so lightly; old men who stop one on the highroad to tell of scenes long past, of children long since departed. So speak the ledges to all who heed them; telling of the great ice sheet, how it shaped and hewed the *roches moutonnées,* how it scored and grooved their faces, how it carried boulders and spread them upon the land and heaped in vast confusion terminal moraines and drumlins;

telling of the crevasses and the torrents, of the whirling stones and pot-holes.

A little eccentricity in the earth's orbit, a little wobbling on its axis, and the wall of ice crept southward, slowly following the retreating sun, driving before it mammoth and sequoia and burying forest and woodland furlongs deep under a limitless expanse of ice. A little irregularity in the orbit of human life, a slight wobbling on the axis of the will, and an aphelion winter brings a glacial climate upon man's life and buries the heart beneath the drifts of frigid thought. There are glacial periods in the lives of men when they are cheerless and desolate to look upon. But there shall come perihelion winters, and the earth shall resume its verdure and life its love. The genial warmth of the human heart shall defy the ice-barriers of the frozen north, bid an ice sheet retreat, and command the boreal winds that they blow gently; for not all the ice-floes of the human mind can withstand the benign influence of a loving heart.

A hush and stillness has settled over all; the woods are silent but for the faint crackling sound of opening cones as a flock of crossbills extract their seeds, or the music of the axe, exulting as it cleaves its way to the heart of a noble forest tree, until the giant quivers throughout its length, leans a little, then leaps to meet its death and falls with one reverberating crash. Then die the echoes, and silence reigns again.

In the somber sky looms a pallid sun but feebly lighting the brief winter day, and suffusing with pale yellow and rose and violet the snowy landscape. The

leafless branches of the elms form delicate traceries against the wintry sky, waving their skeleton fingers to and fro in the chilly wind, and the oriole's nest filled with snow looks disconsolate as any deserted house. Stone walls lie half buried, and bayberries just protrude above the drifts, where the taller grasses scatter their remaining seeds to be gleaned by industrious redpolls. In the revealing snow, mink's track follows partridge, and fox pursues the rabbit. Here the fox loped easily, keeping well to leeward; here a mink took his circuitous route, a skunk his leisurely way, or a crow alighted in the snow leaving sharp tracks of claws and drooping wings or tail. The snow reveals the presence of a community at our very elbows; prowlers in the night and lovers of the early dawn; holders of midnight revels in the snow, and like childhood's fairies vanishing at the approach of day.

Nature will have none of your faint-hearted wooers; she has little respect for the wearers of mufflers and blue goggles. She likes well to be taken by storm and is meekness itself to the rugged and uncompromising. She loves those who face the storm from preference and accords them a rude joy in it; welcomes the bold swimmer and the hardy mountaineer and gives them endurance and hardihood. She would have eye of hawk, sinew of antelope, endurance of wild goose and speed of darting trout. To be able to lie in the snow and sleep, to break the ice on the pond and bathe,—these are rugged virtues well esteemed. She exacts of her votaries deep chests, keen eyes, supple and sinewy limbs; likes them sure-footed, tan-faced and ruddy. Always she

rejoices at the advent of an observant mind—receptive, alert, intuitive, to which she may reveal her secrets; the imaginative and sympathetic mind that will "hole up" with the woodchuck and swim under ice with muskrat, or with the field-mouse traverse its runways in the snow, or hanging head downward, there with the chickadees cheerfully glean the eggs of insects. You shall be for the nonce woodchuck, muskrat and chickadee, you shall prowl with the red fox, and return unerringly to buried acorns with the gray squirrel if you would penetrate the arcana of nature. Upon some barren rock in the desolate expanse of ocean, there shall you sit in solitary grandeur with the albatross, calm and self-reliant; there to unfold the mighty wings and without preparation, without possessions—with only courage, to launch out into limitless solitudes, superior to cold and fatigue, superior to wind and wave, contemptuous of all exterior forces—dauntless! Where maddened waves are lashed to fury by the gale and the hissing spray is blown in sheets over the seething waters, there with kittiwake and petrel shall you sail with airy grace. To range back of the winds, to be present at the birth of a snowflake, and to perform its cyclic journey with a rain-drop,—passing from the visible to the invisible, and returning,—to proceed with the hybernating bear to where it dwells in thought while the shaggy body lies dormant and well inclosed in rock and ice; to enter the winter buds of shellbark and pignut and there await with the spirit of life the appointed time to act; or within the acorn beneath the snow, to be present when the fiat comes to put out root and stem, to behold the elements

rushing to support the new tree and to overhear the sun's first greeting to the young leaves; to preside cheerily over the bogs with the red winter berries, and to have a hand in all that takes place, observing the pitcher-plant, each well-turned pitcher filled to the brim and frozen solid,—and the spears of skunk-cabbage already up and waiting beneath the snow; to enter the vast round of life with an elementary atom and to be built up successively in the forms of mineral, vegetable and animal, subject to endless transmutations: to be thus intimate with Nature is to perceive that life, energy, power are infinite; that the vast elemental lies at the command of the Spirit,—shall obey the spirit in man and ever awaits his recognition, and at its fiat oxygen, hydrogen, carbon, phosphorus are forthcoming and fall into place, building according to the divine pattern.

Nature repays richly this sympathy. You shall have no fear of air or water, ice or snow, heat or cold, and all her aspects shall be friendly to you. January thaw and March winds shall be rich for you in thought; and the gale music to your ears, and the stinging sleet a caress, and leaden skies an inspiration. For there is never a dreary day, but dreary minds only; never a dull one, but dull perception and dull eyes merely that can thus stigmatize the joyous day. No fog can obscure the sunshine of a cheerful mind; no rains dampen the ardor of a brave soul. To the sane mind all weather is good, all days are bright. Health! immortal health, she confers upon her favorites, that they may be sturdy as the pitch pine and the scrub oak, and self-contained as the chickadee which knows not repining nor what

is dejection. Go with Nature and all winds shall blow you fair, and gneiss and granite shall be soft to lie upon, and the snow warm, and the skies a sufficient covering for your head. You shall run exulting on the beach, swim the river like an otter, and swing at ease in the tree tops, at home with the flying squirrel. The immeasurable health and vitality of nature shall flow in your veins, and you shall reflect that infinitude of repose which makes action tireless and thought endless; for it is not in Nature to fret nor fume, nor does she know stress nor strain, but bides her time, enacting with measured and conscious power. But to the unsympathetic she seems a cold mother, refusing to nurse her own child; and they shiver with the blast and live fearful of wind and water who cross her purpose.

We malign Nature with our saws and our laws. How often do we write *Beware,* and *Caution,* and with what constancy tiptoe the earth and dodge the danger signals of our fertile imagining! Will our good mother devour us then; does she fatten us with dainties, pamper us with sunshine, gladden us with flowers that we may be the more tender? Fie upon us that we can think so meanly. If we are so ungracious that we must inquire if the order of nature be beneficent, let us ask, then, why is the earth not enveloped in fetid gases rather than pure air; why does it not rain frogs; why do not monstrous things grow on trees, rather than fair fruit, or the sun play truant and leave us in darkness to pursue our abysmal wanderings? It would doubtless have been as easy to have ordered it so. No, but if we lack trust let us admit the fault lies with us and not with God.

By what a thread hangs the life of a foolish man that he deems it in a fair way to be snapped by every trivial occurrence.

He who takes his tonic from the air of mountains and of the sea where it is always on draught laughs at pills and lotions. The drug shop is Nature's standing joke. Put a plaster on a weasel and give a gargle to the woodchuck and you shall see its absurdity. They have credulity to spare who think to buy their health at the shops by the ounce or grain. Bottle the air and sell it for a tonic if you would reap untold fortunes. He is the great benefactor who can distil the essence of pure thought, for that is the panacea. Open your mind and heart to the divine currents of life and love that would surge into your being and you will throw physic—not to the dogs, but into the limbo of superstitions,—for health is neither bought nor sold but is free to healthy minds, as free as air and water and sunshine; and it is in the mortar of the mind with the pestle of thought that we shall compound the elixir of trust, of kindness and cheerfulness.

When our harp of thought is out of tune we have but to go into the woods and pastures, to climb a hill or follow a stream to have Nature give us the key, and in a twinkling we are brought into accord with her sanity and made sensible of the divine harmonies within us. It is a common illustration of the power of suggestion. Our moods, our vexations and discontent are all mild forms of dementia. But Nature is eminently sane; she will have none of our moping and complaining, but sends a red squirrel to scold and chatter at us, or a chickadee to express his poise

and complacency. She utters to us such harmonious tinklings and murmurings in the brook flowing under ice, and reveals such charms in tapering icicles glistening cheerily in the sunshine, that we become suddenly ashamed of our weakness, and our lunacy vanishes before the potent spell of example. Nature has tactfully diverted us from our whims and infused her sanity and health into our receptive minds, while up from the river comes the faint and muffled booming of the ice with its assurance of the spring.

BOOKS *by* STANTON DAVIS KIRKHAM

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EAST AND WEST

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THE PHILOSOPHY OF SELF-HELP

THE MINISTRY OF BEAUTY

WHERE DWELLS THE SOUL SERENE

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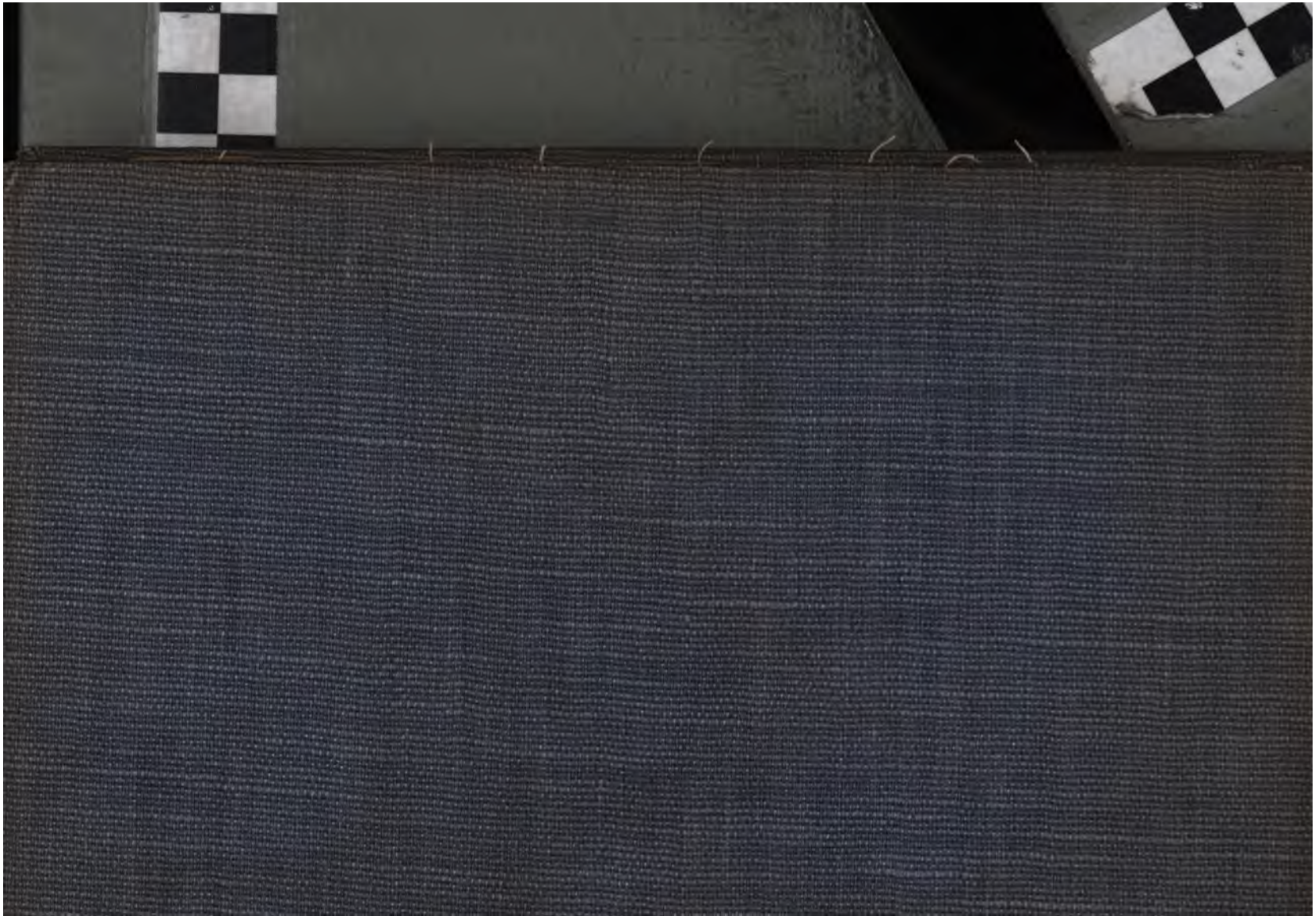
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